This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

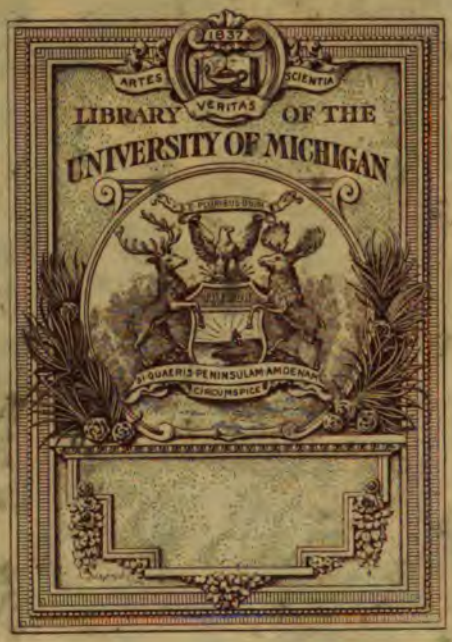
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


1837
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

828
W513l
C68

SAMUEL WESLEY.

THE

A Poem

[illegible]

[illegible]

BY THOMAS COKE, LL. D.

[illegible]

[illegible]

EDWARD L. ROE, LL. D.

[illegible]

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

BY REV. FRANK CRANE

CHICAGO

[illegible]

[illegible]

SAMUEL WESLEY.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

A Poem

By the REV. SAMUEL WESLEY
Vicar of Epworth

REVISED
By THOMAS COKE, LL. D.,
Of the University of Oxford

EDITED
By EDWARD T. ROE, LL. B.,
Author of "Precious Pictures from the Bible," "Poetic Jewels," Etc.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
A Sketch of the Author
By REV. FRANK CRANE

CHICAGO:
UNION BOOK COMPANY
1900

COPYRIGHT, 1900,
BY UNION BOOK COMPANY.

List of Illustrations

Samuel Wesley, ... *Frontispiece.*

The Holy Mother, ... 22

Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, ... 52

The Announcing Angel, ... 72

The Nativity.—Visit of the Shepherds, . . 102

Repose in Egypt, ... 123

Christ among the Doctors, ... 128

John the Baptist, ... 194

Christ Walks on the Water, ... 234

The Raising of Jairus's Daughter, . . . 260

Christ Taking Leave of His Mother, . . . 272

Christ and the Rich Ruler, ... 318

Christ Blessing Little Children, . . . 352

Christ the Consoler, ... 370

Christ in Gethsemane, ... 401

The Crucifixion, ... 418

Mary and John at the Sepulchre, . . . 460

Easter Morning.—Christ Appears to Mary Magdalene, ... 479

The Ascension, ... 500

Epworth Rectory, ... 504

AN2292

Introductory Note

MORE than two hundred years have elapsed since Wesley's "Life of Christ" was first presented to the public, and nearly a hundred years since Bishop Coke published his revised edition.

How for more than a century "the mantle of oblivion was drawn over it, so that few, comparatively speaking, knew that such a poem existed," is related by Bishop Coke in the preface to his revised edition, which is reprinted herein immediately following this note.

It is a remarkable fact that some of the greatest literary productions of the world have been saved from oblivion by a mere accident or chance happening. So little was the literary merit of Milton's "Paradise Lost" recognized at the time it was written, that the author had great difficulty in finding a publisher. He finally sold the entire manuscript for ten pounds, or about fifty dollars. Even after the poem was published it was not appreciated by book reviewers or readers, and soon went out of print. Long after it had been forgotten Lord Dorset discovered an old copy of the poem in a second-hand bookstore, and it was given to him as waste paper. He recognized its merit, obtained the indorsement of literary critics, brought out a new edition, and the great poem was launched upon its career of glory. But for Lord Dorset's accidental

finding of that old copy, "Paradise Lost" might have still been slumbering and forgotten. Its discovery and revival is now universally acknowledged to have been a most valuable service to the literature of the seventeenth century. But it was left to the closing years of the nineteenth century to witness a revival of even greater moment to Christian literature in this republication of Samuel Wesley's great epic poem, which was brought about very much after the manner in which "Paradise Lost" was recovered from oblivion. It found, indeed, a more ready welcome at its birth than did Milton's great effort, for its merit was immediately recognized by the literary critics of the day. The poet laureate pronounced it "the greatest of heroic poems," and King William III presented the author with the vicarage of Epworth in honor of his having written it. The poem was published under the patronage of royalty in two magnificent quarto volumes, which none but persons possessed of ample means could afford to own. When the royal editions (of which there were several) were exhausted, the poem dropped out of print, until one hundred years after its first appearance, when Bishop Thomas Coke brought out his revised edition, which was sold through restricted channels, thus preventing its reaching the masses, and therefore from becoming financially profitable to its publishers. So the great poem was again permitted to drop out of notice.

Some two years ago the editor of the present edition discovered in a second-hand bookstore an old copy of Bishop Coke's edition of the poem, and at once saw

the literary merit of the work, and conceived the idea that an American edition in one volume at a price within the reach of the masses would not only constitute an invaluable service to Christian literature, but be appreciated by the American public, and meet with such a reception as to make its continued publication possible. He explained his discovery to the publishers, who coincided with his views, and the result is the restoration of this great Christian epic to the world of literature.

The poem, beyond all controversy, is unsurpassed in the literature of any language in its sublimity of theme, in the pathos of its episodes, and in the truth and vividness of the details of events of deepest interest to man. More than any other epic it appeals to that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. It has been said of Shakespeare that he has revealed every impulse of human action and sounded every emotion of the human heart. So it may be truly said that Samuel Wesley, in "The Life of Christ," has laid bare the inmost workings of the divine mind, and more than any other writer, either of prose or poetry, has "justified the ways of God to man."

In a masterly and eloquent manner and in a more concise and connected form than is to be found anywhere else, the poem presents the entire earthly history of the Saviour, and contains valuable explanatory notes elucidating the various scenes and events related in the text, with citations to corresponding passages of Scripture. As thus annotated, the work constitutes a most admirable companion book to the Bible, and un-

doubtedly many who have found themselves at some trouble to follow the beautiful story of Christ's life as disconnectedly told in the Scriptures will derive new interest in reading the "old, old story" as here connectedly told in the charming language of poetry.

Chicago. E. T. R.

Dr. Coke's Preface

(Abridged from edition of 1809)

THE poem, which is here presented to the reader, was originally written by the Rev. Samuel Wesley, the venerable parent of the late John Wesley, whose extraordinary life has rendered his name more universally known than that of his father. It was first published toward the close of the seventeenth century, and soon passed through more than one edition. This, which is now before me, was printed in 1694. For some time it obtained no inconsiderable degree of notice, from those who feared God, and felt an attachment to the interests of the gospel; but having lived its day, it retired into the shades, and remained in that condition almost forgotten and unknown. More than a century has now elapsed since the mantle of oblivion has been drawn over it; and but few, perhaps, comparatively speaking, know that such a poem ever existed.

The interesting title which this volume bore, and still continues to bear, was that which first excited my attention, and induced me to examine and analyze its several parts. On opening it, the Pindaric stanzas which begin the VIth Book (but which now make the conclusion of it), and assert the divinity of our Lord, were the first which claimed my attention. And being forcibly struck with the boldness of thought and pro-

priety of expression which the poet had there introduced on the most sublime of all occasions, I was induced to examine the whole with greater earnestness than the promiscuous perusal of any other parts would probably have excited.

The subject itself, of which the poem professed to treat, was awfully important, and could not fail to be in the last degree interesting. The life of our blessed Lord, I was convinced, furnished an inexhaustible fund of the richest materials, and displayed a variety of scenes, which gave room for the poet to introduce every virtuous and vicious passion, and to exercise his utmost powers to excite those hopes and fears which operate so powerfully on the human mind. These valuable materials I found the poet had carefully collected, with a sedulity that surpassed my expectation; and arranged them with a degree of art that nothing but the hand of a master could reach. In surveying the character of Christ, as here delineated, no remarkable incident of his life, from the cradle to his cross, was found to have been omitted. Nay, if we even take a still wider range, every event of moment was noticed, from the espousals of his mother to his resurrection from the dead and final ascension into glory. Within this extensive compass, the scenes which were unfolded presented a surprising diversity. The miracles of our Lord supplied what was truly great and wonderful; and his parables and plain discourses furnished an excellent groundwork, as well as the most incontrovertible axioms, for such departments of the poem as were didactic and

ethical. Of these facts, the beatitudes, which are introduced into the IVth book, afford the most convincing proofs. In his humility and glory, his sufferings and patience, his temptation and conquests, his weakness and power, we behold such amazing contrasts as fable can not supply, and such as no one less than the Son of God could realize. To bring these subjects before the reader, the poet had introduced a variety of characters. These were so judiciously selected, and so admirably arranged, as to suit with poetic exactness their respective stations, and perform the parts which they were called to fulfill. This made way for the numerous episodes which appear, and which were evidently designed to afford pleasure as well as to impart instruction.

But the life of Christ, being closely connected both with time and eternity, presented to the poet an occasion to draw aside the curtain which divides the visible from the invisible world. In consequence, both heaven and hell are permitted to burst upon us, the former to ravish us with its glories, and the latter to alarm us with its terrors. Hence angels and devils pass in review before our eyes — relate what is past, discover their conditions and employments, perform their respective actions, and retire. In this sublime and extensive process, the allegories of our Lord served as connective links, and were introduced to illustrate those truths which the various personages declared. Hence nothing, however wonderful, was improbable; nothing was extravagantly astonishing; and nothing appeared

either more awful or more glorious than we were prepared to expect, because the existing powers to which the various actions were ascribed, were always adequate to the accomplishment of those deeds which were performed.

The original plan of Mr. S. Wesley remains unaltered, except in the VIth book. The very long conversation between Gamaliel and the centurion concerning the heathen mythology, and the debate between St. James and St. Paul (then persecuting Saul of Tarsus) on the Jewish traditions, are entirely dropped. They discover great learning and ingenuity, but are very tedious, and more proper for a treatise in prose than for a poem. These circumstances have obliged me to make several alterations in the division of the Vth and VIth books. In every other respect the original design has neither received additions nor suffered diminutions. Every character is preserved, and no new one is introduced to bear the others company. These fill the places they originally filled, and sustain their primitive relations to one another. Hence the contents which precede each book, the VIth excepted, are preserved, without undergoing any alterations but such as are of a verbal nature. A considerable part, also, of the Notes which were subjoined to each book, continue nearly as they were. Many, however, have been expunged, because the changes which have been made in the versification have rendered them totally unnecessary.

Whether, through these alterations and additions,

the poem has acquired any advantages which may be deemed considerable, is a question which others must determine. The writer flatters himself that on a comparative estimate they will be found not unworthy of regard.

There is perhaps no species of writing more entertaining than that of biographical narrative; but its utility must in no small degree depend upon the character of him who becomes the subject of historical relation. This must always form the criterion when the writer presents to the world a faithful delineation. An individual, who has been renowned for probity and virtue, may become an example to thousands, who may view him as a pattern worthy of imitation; and his history may diffuse virtues through various departments of life, to which our calculations can not reach. But if these remarks are forcible as they apply to mere mortals, what additional energy must they not acquire when applied to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? His whole life was replete with wonders and the most exalted virtues; and on these accounts was most worthy of being recorded, and most admirably adapted to receive the embellishments of poetical diction. Through this medium, the same truths may become to many more impressive than when delivered in prose, and are more easily retained by the memory than when they are communicated in any other way.

It has been said by Aristotle, Bossu, and others that "fable is a necessary ingredient in epic poetry." This no doubt is true, when the heroes brought on the

stage are only of a common stature, and can perform nothing more than mere mortal exploits. But in the character of our Lord, we find everything in most glorious reality which useful fable can be supposed to supply. The miracles, which, in other poems, the invention of the author creates imaginary beings to perform, are here founded in sacred truth, and the interposition of real invisible agents. The ground, therefore, on which fable delights to take its stand, is already occupied by most sublime facts; and in proportion as an exchange is made between them, the whole historical relation must suffer disadvantages. Epic poetry can, therefore, never be in want of fable, while fact and incident can furnish all that is necessary. Indeed, "to mingle falsehoods (as Mr. Wesley has observed), or dull and legendary fictions, which have neither life nor soul in them, with the blessed gospel of our Saviour, is, in some sense, to make them superior to it. But certainly, expressing the truth in parables, and mingling these with the mysteries of the gospel, can not be thought to give it an air of fiction; nor dare anyone to affirm that it does, without blasphemy, since our Saviour has so often done it."

It has been said, that—

> "The gospel offers nothing to our thoughts
> But penitence and punishment for faults."

But such as are acquainted with its history know that "it brings life and immortality to light," and that it opens "a new and a living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and such as have felt its spiritual influence, experience that "it is the power of God unto salvation."

We know that it holds out the noblest examples, the most exalted motives, and the most glorious rewards; and affords sublimer instances of benevolence, friendship, magnanimity, and heroic suffering, than any other real history, or even fable, can produce. "It shows us (says Mr. Wesley) a God really descending, disrobed indeed of all his more dazzling and insupportable glories, but yet clothed with what has more of true divinity — with condescension, and charity, and patience, and meekness, and innocence." The gospel not only points out to us what we are, but also what we should be, and furnishes the means through which the highest degree of moral excellence may be attained. In fine, it is replete with every blessing, and contains the last and greatest gift that ever God bestowed upon mankind.

If we look to the Lord Jesus Christ, we behold in his life and death those transcendent excellencies, which at once excite our astonishment, our gratitude, and our love. If we advert to his words, we must be convinced that "he spake as never man spake," and if we look to his actions, we behold him "fulfilling all righteousness," and "magnifying the law, and making it honorable." If we recur to his power, we find that "in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;" and if we survey his love, we discover that "while we were yet sinners, he died for us." If we question the extent of the gospel, we are informed that "by the grace of God he tasted death for every man;" and if we view his compassions, we are assured that his "tender mercies are over all his works." If we cast our eyes on his doctrines and his laws, we behold them replete with wisdom, and full of such exalted

precepts as command our ascent, and compel us to acknowledge that they are divine. His life presents us with a scene of miracles, his death with an exit of unexampled resignation and dignity, his resurrection with a triumphant conquest and his ascension with an apotheosis which overwhelms the pious and contemplative mind with a flood of genuine glory. Such then is the character of the hero of this poem; and such are some of the important truths which are interwoven in these books.

But glorious as these truths may appear, they are of much further importance to mankind than merely to embellish narrations, or to adorn the character of the hero. They are connected with our dearest interests; and are given with a design to disperse that mist of ignorance which sin has raised; to unfold to our discernment a view of our mental and moral condition, and to show the relation in which we stand to God. Nor is this all. The same light which shows our situation by nature, informs us of our danger, and directs us how to escape impending ruin. It points us to the atoning blood of that Saviour who died on Calvary,—displays its efficacy, and fully discovers the path which leads from sin to holiness, from earth to heaven, and from Satan to the Living God.

Nor is this light of a solitary nature, which, like the lunar beam, merely renders objects visible, but communicates neither energy nor warmth. It is accompanied with power which imparts "strength to them that have no might,"—a power which "transforms us by the renewing of our minds," changing us in our hearts and lives, and leading us through the gradations of holiness to

"prepare to meet our God." It is only through this efficacy, in conjunction with this light, that we can escape the corruptions that are in the world "through lust." But "through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things." Through the light of his truth, and the influence of his Holy Spirit, we may be prepared for "an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." That these happy effects may result from this representation of the "Life of Christ," is the earnest prayer of THOMAS COKE.

Dublin, July 15, 1809.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—Thomas Coke was born in Brecon, Wales, on Sept. 9, 1747, and was educated at Oxford. His name first appears on the conference minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1778 as a preacher of the London circuit. He was a close friend of John Wesley, and was of great assistance to him in conducting his enormous correspondence. In January, 1784, Coke issued the first Methodist "plan of the society for the establishment of Missions among the heathen." In September of the same year Wesley appointed him "Superintendent" to discharge episcopal functions in American Methodist Societies. Leaving England on Sept. 18, 1784, he arrived at Baltimore in time to meet the conference on Christmas day, and organized the societies of America into a distinct church, the new organization taking the name of *The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.* Coke was a laborious and faithful itinerant, making nine voyages to America, the last being in 1803.

Note by the Editor

His name was given to Cokesbury College, founded not far from Baltimore, on June 5, 1785. Bishop Coke was an admirer of the American spirit of independence, and gave great offense to England by signing on May 29, 1789, an address of congratulation from "the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to George Washington," a measure which the next English conference strongly condemned. In the same year the first Methodist "missionary committee" was formed, with Coke at the head of it, and henceforth he was the recognized director of the wide-spreading operations of Methodist enterprise beyond the British Isles. His last enterprise was a voyage undertaken with a view to promote the evangelization of India. He set sail from Portsmouth in the *Cabolva* on Dec. 30, 1813. On the voyage his health failed, and he was found dead in his cabin on May 3, 1814. His body was committed to the deep. In 1828 a monument was erected to his memory in the Priory Church of Brecon.

Contents of the First Book

THE proposition. The invocation. Our Saviour's ascent on Mount Tabor, with his three disciples; whence they take a view of the country about it. The transfiguration; after which our Saviour descends from the mount; and after having foretold his passion, going through Galilee, approaches Jerusalem. In his passage thither over Mount Olivet, he raises Lazarus from the dead; then being invited by Simon the Leper to a feast, in whose house the destruction of Sodom is described on a suit of tapestry, Mary Magdalene there anoints his feet. The next day he descends to Jerusalem, and makes his triumphant entry into the city, attended by vast crowds of people, bearing palms, and singing hosannas; whence he retires in the evening to Mount Olivet, which is described, with the country about it. The description of the garden near Gethsemane, and our Saviour's usual employment there. A digression concerning divine love, and virtuous friendship. A character of the three disciples, Peter, James, and John. Their descent from the mount. Their invitation by Joseph of Arimathea, who had been eye-witness to many of our Saviour's miracles, and their interview with him, Nicodemus, and Gamaliel according to Joseph's appointment.

From painting by Goodall.

THE HOLY MOTHER

The Life of Christ

BOOK I

I sing the God, who, though enthroned on high,
In human nature deigned to live and die:
I sing the God each modest seraph sings,
The most afflicted, yet the best of kings;
Him, who from heaven to earth's vile shores came down,
Without his sceptre, diadem, or crown,
To banish Satan to the flames below,
And rescue mortals from impending woe.
Pain marked his steps in his incarnate state,
But godlike patience made him truly great.
To close our wounds he poured his precious blood,
And with his life procured our peace with God.
In his example we distinctly see
What Jesus was and what we ought to be.
He taught us precepts disbelieved before,
And gave his life when he could give no more.
Hence a new era in the world began,
And Heaven descended to reside with man;
The golden age appeared again restored,
And saints and angels hailed their common Lord.
What seers predicted stood revealed to sight,
While earth from heaven received auspicious light;
Reviving hope began afresh to bloom,
And faith's strong optics pierced beyond the tomb.

Thus lived and died the Saviour, to regain
Apostate man from everlasting pain!
Such was the price our great Redeemer gave
To ransom wretches whom he came to save.

Will then my Lord propitious aid refuse,
Invoked my God, my Hero, and my Muse?
I sing his life, and humbly hope for aid
From him by whom created worlds were made;
And hence attempt a work immense and rare,—
A work too vast for angel minds to bear.
The mightiest masters of the tuneful throng,
Whose souls were smitten with the charms of song,
Whose names will live till suns shall cease to shine,
Great Milton, Cowley, Herbert, all divine,—[1]
These felt the weighty task; but feeling, feared,
Just sketched its outlines, shrunk, and disappeared.
How then shall I, a nameless thing, presume
To fill with honor their illustrious room?
To shine conspicuous where their laurels fade,
Or make more progress than these bards have made?

O thou, whose word this All of nothing made,
And good pronounced the beauteous scene displayed,
O may thy all-enlivening Spirit shine
Through every part of this new world of mine!
Both light and being by thy fiat give,
And this through thee with time shall die or live.

---

[1] Milton, in his "Paradise Lost;" Cowley, in his beautiful description of the angel's annunciation, and incarnation of our Saviour, in "David's Dream, or Vision;" and Herbert, in his

Thus shall the secret cause appear revealed,
Why this succeeded where these poets failed.

Two worlds already had confessed our Lord
By angels honored, and by fiends abhorred;
Both Hell and Earth their attestations brought,
And rage and gladness proved the cures he wrought.
His great designs this varied witness gave,
Those to subdue, but these he came to save.
His ransomed subjects loud hosannas sing,
While fiends retire and curse their ancient King.
Already he in deserts waste and wild,
In godlike innocence severely mild,
Had met the tyrant of the realms below,
And hand to hand subdued the mighty foe,
Who, cursing, fled, as when transfixed he fell
With double vengeance to the flames of hell.
Thus God at last in his own cause appears,
To ransom man, and wipe his servants' tears.

Yet those who people the bright realms of day,
Must also homage to their Master pay,
To vouch for glories not allowed to shine,
And prove to man his embassy divine.
On Tabor's mount t' evince his mission true,
Both heaven and earth sustained this interview.

---

excellent "Sacrifice." I might have added more; but all that I have seen are no better than fragments, a complete work of this nature having never yet, as far as I know, been attempted in our language.

This mount of God,[1] as Sinai long before,
Celestial glories, now descending, bore.
With glowing beauties this divine abode[2]
Recalled the ancient Paradise of God.
Its steep ascent we climb with pleasing pain
But as we rise we view the op'ning plain,
Till from its lofty summit we descry
Unnumbered beauties stretching to the eye,
And underneath, around the spacious coast,
The noblest prospect Jewry's land can boast.
If east by north these prospects you pursue,

[1] The mount of transfiguration is called the holy mount by St. Peter in his epistles. Nor is there any great doubt but that this was Mount Tabor, the Itabyrium of Josephus, since most of the moderns and ancients are of that opinion. The primitive Christians undoubtedly believed it, which they might easily do by tradition, from the disciples; and accordingly the Empress Helena built three Oratories, as is supposed, in the very place of the transfiguration.

[2] The greater part of Palestine is, even now, described by those who have seen it as so beautiful that it is impossible for poetry to mend it; particularly this Mount Tabor, which all travellers represent as one of the most delicious places in the world. Among many, see Survius's "Pieux Pelerine," p. 316. "Le sommet de ce sacré mont est fort agréable, etc. The top of this holy mount is extremely agreeable and pleasant. 'T is situated in the great plain of Esdraelon, about three leagues from Nazareth, in form like a sugar-loaf, with a curious pleasant plain on the top; from whence to the foot of it, it is all covered with flowers, trees, and shrubs, which are always green or flourishing, as balsam-trees, olives, laurels," etc. And lower: This mount seems to have one of the most beautiful prospects in the world. To the east you may see the Sea of Galilee, part of Stony Arabia, and the Mount of the Beatitudes. To the west, Mount Carmel and the Great Sea (the Mediterranean). North, Bethulia and Mount Libanus. South, the plain of Esdraelon, mountains of Gilboa, Hermon, Endor, Main, etc.

Royal Tiberias[4] rises to your view,
Whose wealthy lords their evening pleasures take
In numerous boats upon the neighboring lake;[5]
While ships of burden float with decent pride
In deeper waters on the swelling tide;
These wave their streamers and expand their sails,
And with spread canvas intercept the gales.
Beyond these bounds appears, due east, well-known
Arabia's bosom, chiefly famed for stone.

South Kishon rolls, whose banks new waters fill,
When passed by Western Hermon's gentle hill,
It rolls august, but yields a weaker tide
Than when the stars engaged on Israel's side;
When o'er its crimsoned waves, a ghastly throng,
Bodies, and shields, and helms, promiscuous rolled along.
Its winding course thence west and northward goes,
And near the walls of little Nain flows.
Hence Carmel's yielding groves entice its waves,
To add new beauties to the soil it laves.

---

[4] Then a new town, built by Herod on the west side of the lake, which bears its name (see the next note) in honor of the emperor Tiberius, whence it was called, as Cæsarea Philippi in Auranitis, by his brother Philip.

[5] The lake Gennezareth, so celebrated in the New Testament for many of our Saviour's short voyages; for which reason we shall here once for all give a full account of it. It has several names, both proper and common. It is called a lake for the most part in St. Luke, because a conflux of fresh waters; Jordan falling into it about the northeast corner, by Chorazin and Capernaum, passes through it. It is called a sea by the other Evangelists, not only for its largeness, but according to the idiom of the Hebrew language, which gives the name of sea to all gatherings together of waters, as the sea of Jazor, east of Jordan, and even the Brazen Sea belong-

Here, when Elijah Baal's minions slew,*
Who brought false gods to supersede the true,
This stream received the impious culprit's blood,
And on its margin Israel turned to God.
From hence it rolls to the great western flood,
A little north, where wealthy Tyrus stood;
Whose stately walls nor storms nor ocean fear,
Whose hardy sons defied the wastes of war.
Her sister Sidon asks a bolder flight,
A tedious distance to the wearied sight,
A greater journey than the eye has made,
And seems half buried in projecting shade.
For close behind it with aspiring height,
The clouds of Libanus obstruct the sight.

---

ing to the Temple. It has four proper names in the Scriptures: one in the Old Testament, the sea of Cinneroth, either from a town so-called on its borders, or from its form, something like a harp; in the Hebrew Cinner. In the New Testament it is styled the lake or sea of Gennezareth, Galilee, and Tiberias; Gennezareth, either from Gan Hortus, and Nazor, a flower; or compounded of two languages, a thing common enough; from γῆ Terra and Nazareth, a famous neighboring town, or perhaps some small district thereabout; lastly, the Sea of Galilee, from the country so-called, washing most of its eastern side, and especially the town of Tiberias, standing between Jotopata and Tarichæa, the latter of which Josephus says had much shipping. At the northwest corner of the sea or lake stands Bethsaida; on the east side, Gadara, which made such a desperate defense against the Romans; and near that Gerasa or Girgase, which names that whole side of the country, being all the remains of the old nation of the Girgashites, destroyed by Joshua. Josephus makes this lake a hundred furlongs in length and six in breadth, describing at large, thereon, the famous sea fight of the people of that country with the Romans. Our Biddulph says, it is twenty-four miles long, and fifteen broad.

* 1 Kings xviii. 40.

If southern views our wandering eyes detain,
Jezreel appears, and rich Megiddo's plain;
In that dire spot, unhappy Naboth fell;
In this, Josiah bade the world farewell.
But angry justice overtook the base,
And rooted out vile Ahab's wicked race.

To this fair mount our blessed Lord repaired,
By those attended who his favors shared.
Two destined martyrs,[6] and the third his friend,
By him selected, with their Lord ascend.
First James and John, whose superadded name
Was drawn from thunder to express their flame.[7]
Cephas came next, whose more unrivaled zeal
Our Lord rebuked ere it was known to fail.
These, with his more peculiar favor blessed,
He takes apart, and leaves behind the rest.

Scarce had the cheerful harbinger of day
Warned with his voice the shades of night away,
Before our watchful Saviour (who denies
The sun, his shade, before himself should rise),
Had conquered Tabor's lofty summit, where
His soul ascends in ardent hymns and prayer.
No earthly thought, no sublunary things,
Could clog his spirit or retard its springs,
Or check its progress to the Father's throne,

---

[6] St. Peter, crucified at Rome with his head downward; and St. James, beheaded by Herod.

[7] So interpreted by the Evangelist himself, "Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder."

The mystic mansion of the great Three-One.
To Tabor's mount he beckoned from the sky
Two glorious saints who reigned enthroned on high,*—
Moses, the leader of God's chosen band,
Who nature's laws inverted with his wand;
With him Elijah, who sublimely rode
A car of lightning to the throne of God;
Whose soul of flame as pure and warm was made
As those which him to his reward conveyed.
Thus law and prophets their perfection find[8]
In Him who suffered to redeem mankind.
Thus Christ, and Moses, and Elias came,
Their persons diff'rent, but their views the same.
These, wrapped in glory, on Mount Tabor walked,
And things unutterable looked and talked.
Yet thus compared, Elijah's zeal decayed
And Moses saw his rivaled weakness fade.

Here they conversed on God's mysterious love,
But half revealed to those enthroned above.
They knew their Lord, their Monarch of the sky,
Must yield to death, although he could not die;
The Light of Light, hymned by the heavenly choir,
The co-essential Son of his Almighty Sire.
This sacred doctrine fully to explain
The host of heaven had labored long in vain.

---

*Matt. xvii. 3; Mark ix. 4; Luke ix. 30.

[8] It is an observation of some of the Fathers that by the appearance of Moses and Elias to our Saviour was figured the harmony between the law, the prophets, and the gospel, which he then came to deliver. And, indeed, there seems to be more of solidity in this than in most of those allegorical fancies.

But though they could not his designs explore,
Their duty bade them credit and adore.

While thus conversing, these the truth discerned,
And from the Saviour the dread secret learned.
Dull slumbers seized the three apostles' eyes,
And due attention from each bosom flies.
Fatigued and careless they supinely lay,
Nor knew the worth of this important day.
The Saviour saw, and with a piercing beam
Roused the dull sloths from their inglorious dream.
They starting gazed, but found the scene too bright,
And shrunk disordered from the flood of light:
Confused, o'erwhelmed, with these refulgent beams,
It seemed a vision of romantic dreams.
Thus when the last, the dreadful moment comes,
That groaning nature shall unfold her tombs,
When God's pavilion in the clouds is spread
And lambent lightnings flame around his head,
Creation trembling at the sight shall fly,
And guilty mortals wish again to die.

The Saviour saw their visual orbs oppressed,
And half the glory of the scene repressed.
What yet remained his condescension veiled,
And mitigated what was not concealed.
Then, though they gazed, the wondrous things they saw
Their utmost powers were far too weak to draw.
Unrivaled beauties decked the Saviour's face,
His dazzling form the circling glories grace.
His seamless coat, than falling snows more white,
Inclosed a pillar of transparent light:

This stands alone, though human arts combine,
And clearly prove the workmanship divine.
The two great prophets who beside him stood,
Arrayed in light, their modest glories showed.
Thus stars appear, when twinkling they display
Their feeble lustre to the orb of day.
Yet Moses who from trembling Sinai came,
Appeared encircled in a robe of flame;
While great Elijah, half concealed from sight,
Shone with strange lustre through a cloud of light:
Should we these scenes to things on earth compare,
We needs must blot what should be rendered fair,
Just as the painter, who designs to show
The sun above, portrays a cloud below.

The sun advancing trembled as he shone,
Eclipsed with splendors stronger than his own;
Yet seeing Him whom distant worlds obey,
Dispelled the clouds, and drove the car of day.
Thus cherubs look in their harmonious course
Near light and beauty's unexhausted source;
Their robes grow brilliant when, commanded, they
Some mighty message to the world convey.

Transports of joy filled each disciple's breast,
Too big for utterance, or to be repressed.
They saw their reason in these truths expire,
Just as the sun extinguishes the fire.
Thus when some prophet has a vision seen,
Or feels an impulse from his God within,
In all his gestures, in his eyes, we find
Decisive tokens of his lab'ring mind;

The springs of nature full of life appear:
Thus the disciples looked and acted here.
What they perceived, was pleasure mixed with pain,
And what they feared, was losing it again.
Their pond'ring thoughts in mute suspension hung,
And solemn silence sat on every tongue,
Till Cephas, urged to ease his anxious breast,
Spoke for himself the language of the rest:
"Much honored Master, if thy servants are
Peculiar objects of thy heavenly care,
Grant us permission on this mount to stay;
Or if we move, O take our souls away.
If thus permitted to continue here,
We can with ease three tabernacles rear,
For thee, for Moses, for Elias one;
Speak but the word, the labor shall be done;
Nor has creation's Lord disdained to dwell
In the poor tents of favored Israel."

Scarcely had Cephas these desires declared,
Before new scenes of miracles appeared.
Around their heads celestial clouds arise,
Which rather brighten than conceal the skies;
Compared with day they seemed divinely fair,
And scattered odors through the balmy air:
Formed of materials most serenely bright,
They shone a tissue of unsullied light.
Such are those fleeces which unheeded stray,
Where God dispenses everlasting day:
Such was that cloud which made the world's first morn,
Ere the young sun or infant stars were born:

Such was that pillar which from Egypt moved
To pilot myriads by their God beloved.
From earth to heaven the lofty column spread,
A moving mountain formed of flame and shade.

The three Apostles, as the clouds prevail,
Felt all their spirits and their muscles fail;
Their loins relax, their knees no strength impart,
And fear and trembling seize on every heart.
Thus, heavenly virtue, though through shadows seen,
Must with convulsions strike the sons of men.
Low on the earth, dissolved in reverent fear,
They hear a voice which none but they must hear;
The voice of God; no more in frowns expressed,
With lightnings written, or in thunders dressed,
Such as Sinai issued forth the law,
And with dread earthquakes rocked the plains below,
But all melodious, tranquil, and serene,
Which charmed like music this delightful scene.
In words like these the will of God was given,
In attestation of the King of Heaven:—
"I thus declare thee my Beloved Son,
Whom all my servants shall both hear and own."

They heard, but durst not the great Speaker meet,
But humbly prostrate kiss their Master's feet;
Who, with those accents which the dead can raise,
Soothed his weak friends, who wake to bursts of praise:
Then silent gazed, but could no more discern
The heavenly pair, whose absence now they mourn.

Thus holy souls from sin's gross dregs refined
Whose frames assimilate to perfect mind,
Whose mystic converse with the saints in light
Remains unbroken, and imparts delight—
When these perceive, through sleep's dim curtains, shine
Angelic essences and forms divine,
They wake, and sigh to find them disappear,
Or rapt in vision clasp the empty air.
So these had mourned, but that their gracious Lord
Dispelled their sorrows with his peaceful word.
He, raised above that flame which men desire,
Of glory kindled at ambition's fire,
What they had seen commands them to conceal,
For reasons then not prudent to reveal,
Till he, the Saviour of the world, should die,
Forsake the tomb, and reascend the sky.
Then should these links in proper order shine,
And prove the chain of evidence divine.

They all amazed revolved his deep intent,
Nor fathomed what these strange expressions meant;
That Christ must die, they heard with strange surprise,
And burst the barriers of the tomb and rise:
Hence tardy faith these painful truths received,
And half suspected what it half believed.
On quitting Tabor he the same expressed,
And tides of grief infused in every breast;
Described his wounds, his pains, those scenes of woe,
Which he, though sinless, soon must undergo.
How he, to enter death's uneasy gate,
Must bear the guilty world's unequal weight,

Yet burst asunder death's inglorious chain,
And the third morning rise to life again.

Peculiar anguish entered every heart
At truth so dreadful which his lips impart.
All would as gladly, if they durst, reprove,
As Cephas did through his officious love.
"This shall not be," presumptuously he cried,
And in effect the truth of God denied.
Oh! born to err, our kindness soars too high,
Or Christ must suffer, or the world must die.
He knew what heavy ransom must be paid,
Ere time was born, or earth's foundation laid;
He knew the time, and pointed to that hour
When He for man his sacred blood must pour.
The place appeared, Jerusalem was nigh,
Whose lofty turrets glittered in the sky;
A city charged with seas of blood before,
Yet this of Christ must now involve it more,
And treasure vengeance for that awful day,
When Roman eagles, watching for their prey,
Should seize her sons to stern destruction given,
And on their heads discharge the wrath of heaven.

Christ from this place to Galilee repairs,
Eased by devotion while oppressed by cares;
And through its wilds a silent journey takes,
Nor aims at greatness by the cures he makes;
Yet vain his efforts to proceed concealed,
Suns always shine by their own light revealed.
See from afar what crowding myriads come,

And in their train, the blind, the halt, the dumb;
Impelled by hope, abandoned cripples meet,
And find compassion at the Saviour's feet.
From old Bethabara the sick they bring,
And swarms attend from Jordan's double spring,
Lepers, demoniacs, feel the genial shower,
And trembling demons shrink beneath his power.
The lame their feet without their crutches find,
And those go seeing who approached him blind.

But oh, what angel's eloquence could prove
A just describer of his deeds of love!
His light imparted to relieve the blind,
Shone on their spirits to illume their mind.
Returning vigor to the lame was given,
That these restored might urge their way to heaven.
And while the leper felt his softening skin,
Grace overcame the leprosy within.
How oft has Christ, with deeds like these oppressed,
Retired from labor to solicit rest!
Thus while his works evinced his heavenly birth,
Fatigue proclaimed him like the sons of earth.
To gain that rest which gath'ring crowds denied,
He sometimes slept upon the swelling tide,
And found repose upon the hoary main,
Which earth refused, or made him seek in vain.

'T was in a boat of fair Bethsaida's town,*
Which James and John, their Sire, and Peter own,
That Christ retired to taste the balm of sleep,

* Matt. viii. 26; Mark iv. 39.

Or wake alternately to pray and weep,
When he exerted his almighty sway,
Which both the ocean and the storms obey.
'Twas at a time when length'ning shadows stray
To warn mankind of the decline of day,
That he forsook the Galilean shore,
The men and coasts of Gadara to explore;
And when on board, the humble cabin takes,
And sleeps, though all his guard of angels wakes.
The anchor weighed, the seamen spread their sails,
And glide in peace before the friendly gales,
While breeze and waves one common promise brought
To land them safely on the coast they sought.
But soon prognostics, terrible to sight,
Deformed the prospects of the flatt'ring night.
The seamen saw a gath'ring vapor rise,
Which snatched the land from their half-wearied eyes,
Still dark'ning more and more the disappearing skies.

Old Zebedee, by long experience taught,
To times and seasons turned his laboring thought:
When first intent he viewed the black'ning air,
He bade his mates for coming storms prepare;
Then seized the helm, as one who knew it best,
And to their quarters ordered all the rest.
Nor was their care more needful than their haste;
A gloomy darkness all the skies o'ercast;
In sullen gusts the winds began to roar,
And drive large billows to the distant shore.
Whether the foe might here attempt to gain
What on the land he struggled for in vain,

Or hoped by sudden onset to prevail,
Where with fair force he durst no more assail;
Or whether nature only lent the storm,
That men might see what Jesus could perform;
By him permitted, who can storms control
Which ravage nature, and unhinge the soul;
Remains uncertain to the human race,
And stands a secret which we can not trace.
But whether this from nature claimed its birth,
Or Him who rules this disobedient earth,
Still more and more its threat'ning rage prevails,
And from the mast divides the splitting sails.
The dead sea roars, and sulph'rous vapors come
In rolling flames from its infernal womb.
Regions remote strange desolations bear,
And bolting thunders bellow through the air.
Old Jordan hears, its waters backward run
(As thrice before)[9] the fatal shock to shun;
Against the stream rolls in the unnatural tide,
And should 'ring seas upon each other ride:
Wind against wind, floods dashing floods, arise,
Whirlwinds and whirlpools blend both earth and skies.
Descending sleets from every quarter come,
And fear and ice the seamen's hands benumb.
Full o'er their heads upon a dismal cloud
Fate's angry messengers for passage crowd.
From its broad front wide sheets of flame are driven,
While wrathful lightnings show the vaults of heaven.
These with new horrors strike their eyes with light;

[9] Once to Joshua, Joshua iii. 10, once to Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 8, then to Elisha, ibid., 14.

But rather burn than interrupt the night.
By these they saw the boiling deep display
Those hidden caves where wild sea-monsters play;
The gulf which yawned produced a horrid shore
Of rocks and shelves unseen by man before.
Above, they heard black worlds of water rave,
While death in triumph rode each threat'ning wave.
Thither on surges, fearfully, they rise,
And hang in pyramids amidst the skies;
Thence deep descending, in the awful vale,
Shun for some moments the destructive gale.
Thus in wild tumult raised, depressed, and tossed,
They mourn their fate, and give themselves for lost.
The helm no more the nervous hand obeys,
But wildly suffers from conflicting seas.
The oozing seams portend some dreadful blow,
Which soon must sink them in the shades below;
Some treach'rous plank they soon expect will start,
Kill their last hopes, and bid their souls depart.
Half filled with streams, which now increasing flow,
A thought occurred that Jesus slept below;
And in that moment when on him they think,
A cry was uttered, "Save us, Lord, we sink."
All prayed, but Judas most, who, dreading fate,
Invoked that aid which now appeared too late.
The Saviour, hearing their expiring cries,
Came to their aid with pity in his eyes,
Chid the mad waves, rebuked the blust'ring wind,
And chained their anger with his mighty mind.
Obedient nature heard his voice, and stood,
And gentle breezes kissed the swelling flood;

The mountains sunk, the vales became a plain,
And zephyrs whispered on the tranquil main:
The night once more became a peaceful shade,
Stilled by that Word by which the world was made.
Thus ere his Fiat gave creation birth,
Or planted order on the spacious earth,
Tumult through chaos caused black waves to roar,
Whose turbid waters knew no rest nor shore.
But when the Godhead its wild bosom pressed,
The unformed elements inclined to rest;
Their mingled masses thenceforth pregnant prove,
And Light was born to Chaos and to Love.
Thus at his voice the boist'rous storms subside,
And stars are seen reflected from the tide;
The crazy vessel reached the destined shore,
And those who trembled, now their Lord adore;
While guilty demons shun his piercing sight,
And flee for succor to their native night.

Yet more illustrious miracles attend
The Saviour's hast'ning to his journey's end.
Strong, and refreshed, to Olive's mount they go,
And thence survey the city stretched below.
Descending hence, among the trees they spy
Thy happy walls, delightful Bethany!
A village this, where Lazarus was lord,
Who often at his hospitable board
Regaled the Saviour and his faithful friends,[10]

[10] They might be all faithful yet, though Judas was afterward corrupted; or, if not, the old *Denominatio à Majori* will be a sufficient plea.

Without adverting to his private ends.
Nor could these friends, so near, neglect that door
Where mutual kindness filled each breast before.
With him two sisters now reposed in love,
And turned their faith and hope to things above.
Martha had long her brother's fortune shared,
And made his int'rest her sincere regard,
Had lived sequestered with unspotted fame,
And cherished virtues which adorned her name.
But hapless Mary had at courts been bred,[11]
And trodden paths where pleasure's snares are laid;
There found her chastity a weak defense
Against those arts which murder innocence.
Her soul subdued by vanity and pride,
Soon lost that virtue which had been her guide:
Hence lust, ambition, each unholy guest,
And seven black demons seized her guilty breast.
These hell-born fiends the Saviour chased away,
As mists are scattered by the rising day;
Recalled her soul by mercy's powerful charms,
From a deceiver's to a Saviour's arms.
Hence an illustrious penitent she proved;
Her crimes were great, and much she wept and loved.
Thence from the court to Bethany she came,
To mourn and pray and spread her Saviour's fame;
Through grace divine she found her soul relieved,
And by her brother was with joy received.

---

[11] I know it is controverted, whether this Mary were the repenting Magdalene; but it is enough for me that some great divines have been of that opinion.

Martha and Mary joined in one request,
And Christ, and his, to see their brother, pressed,
Who now beneath a mortal fever's rage,*
Which no attempts could baffle or assuage,
Just gasped for life: for standing by his bed,
The stern physician shook his awful head;
Thence with slow steps in silence to the door
Walks, and declares his skill can do no more.
The pious sisters, overcome with grief,
Look round on all, soliciting relief;
But looked in vain for what no art can give,
To dry their tears, and make their brother live.
In this distress they called that Friend to mind
Whose powerful voice gave eyesight to the blind;
And sent a message, though it seemed too late,
To snatch their brother from impending fate,
To hasten Christ whose power alone could save
Him whom he loved from sickness or the grave.

Christ in reply forbade them to despair,
And ordered both to dissipate their fear,—
Told them that he who raging sickness proved,
Should spread the glory of the God they loved.
He, notwithstanding, his approach delayed,
And, though requested, at a distance stayed,
Till from his friend the parting soul had fled,
And his remains were lodged among the dead.
The funeral rites with due observance made,
And all just honors to his ashes paid;

---

* Matthew xi.

His weeping friends to his sad house return,
Condole the sisters, and their losses mourn.
But while they poured their lamentations here,
The tidings reached them that our Lord was near.
Martha, on this, her godlike guest to meet,
Left her companions, and embraced his feet;
And while recounting their disaster, cried,
"Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died;
And even now, such is my faith's degree,
Ask what thou wilt, and God will give it thee."
The Saviour, struck with sympathetic pain,
Replied, "Thy brother shall revive again."

Attentive Martha listened to her Lord,
Then ran to Mary with his gracious word;
But still her faith directed her to view
That final hour when all must find it true.
The mourning fair some pious Jews attend,
And praise the deeds of their departed friend;
Recount his virtues, his good actions tell,
And only sigh to live and die as well.
When these perceived that Mary went in haste,
They also rose, not knowing what had passed,
And fully bent to soothe the weeping pair,
Walked to the grave to pour their sorrows there.
Mary, whom Martha to the Saviour bore,
Fell at his feet as Martha fell before;
And prostrate there in plaintive accents cried,
"Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died."
The mournful group the general grief expressed,

And Jesus groaning wept among the rest:[12]
The woes of man his tender passions moved;
He wept like man the loss of what he loved.
Again he wept, and asked where Lazarus lay,
Devoid of life, a sordid lump of clay.
Too well they knew the margin of the cave,
And showed the marble that concealed his grave.
With sighs suppressed, he heaved an inward groan,
And bade the people roll away the stone.
Martha, not yet perceiving his intent,
Anxious to please, yet willing to prevent,
Spoke, paused, lamented, hesitated, sighed,
"'Tis now so long, dear Master, since he died,
That putrid steams must needs infect the air,
Which neither thou nor these his friends can bear."
Jesus replied, "Believe, and wonders see,
And humbly these events consign to me."

The stone removed, to Heaven he lifts his eyes,
And prays a while to him who formed the skies;
Then turning boldly to the lifeless clay,
Before spectators in the face of day,
Lifted that voice which ancient silence broke,

[12] He groaned, John xi. 33, wept, 35. And here I need not tell any judicious reader that I feel myself fall infinitely short of the history, which I think has the most tenderness in it of any in the whole Bible, excepting perhaps that of our Saviour's commending his mother to his friend from the cross, in the ninth book. Nor can scarcely anything be a greater argument of our Saviour's kindness and goodness to mankind, than his being thus concerned at his friends' misfortunes, even when he knew that he should so soon remove them.

That Heaven and earth might witness what he spoke;
Then, with that power which gave creation birth,
Pronounced augustly, "Lazarus, come forth!"

The piercing accents entered death's dark bed,
And from its slumbers woke the trembling dead;
Bound hands and feet, reviving Lazarus moved,
And asked assistance from the friends he loved;
These, while their looks astonishment betray,
Unloosed his fetters, and he walked away.
The gath'ring crowds with stupid wonder gazed,
Looked on each other, then on Christ, amazed.
A bursting joy from all exclaimed, "He lives!
Dread Son of God," they shout again, "he lives!"
Upon his neck the ravished sisters fell,
And claimed almost another miracle
Them from their furious transports to revive,
Half dead with joy that Lazarus was alive.

Christ from the crowd immediately withdraws,
At once to escape his foes, and shun applause;
For in proportion to the good he wrought
The Jewish elders his destruction sought.
Hence to the wilderness a tour he made,
And found a shelter in the desert shade.
In pious deeds his happy moments spent,
And scattered miracles where'er he went;
He lived secluded till that day was nigh
When to redeem us he was doomed to die;
But then returned to suffer, and fulfill
The high commands of his great Father's will.

But ere the Saviour from these coasts retired,
Simon a friendly interview desired.
Simon had long through leprosy been blind,[13]
A shocking spectacle to all mankind—
Had lived secluded in a lonely cell,
Where shut from man infectious lepers dwell.
His foul disease had been so much abhorred
That all forsook him but our gracious Lord,
Who, through compassions most divinely great,
Had quite restored him to a healthy state.
Simon had now in splendid ease retired,
With every blessing that his soul desired;
And near Bethany, his father's seat,
Had cherished virtue on his own estate.
But while his riches in abundance flowed,
His heart with grateful recollection glowed;
Nor once forgot amidst increasing wealth
The great Physician who restored his health.
To Christ one eve he sent, and strongly pressed
Him, with his twelve, to be that night his guest;
Told him a little banquet he'd prepare,
And Laz'rus and his sisters would be there.
To this request the Saviour, in reply,
Gave his consent, his wish to gratify;
For in his life we no mean stiffness see,
His heart was open, and his converse free;
Life's lawful pleasures he vouchsafed to taste,
And all the virtues of both worlds embraced.

---

[13] He is called Simon the leper. Mark xiv. 3.

The guests, arrived, a summer parlor found,
Where Tyrian carpets overspread the ground.
Hangings as rich adorned the stately room,
The dear-bought work of Sidon's noble loom.
On these some figures drew the strangers' eyes,
Which in their breasts excited much surprise.
For full before them, as intent they gazed,
The fate of Sodom they distinctly traced;
And in the features which these colors bore,
It frowned almost as dreadful as before.
The workman's efforts so successful prove
That all the figures seemed to weep and move.
Here in a plain the flaming cities glow,
And there spectators into statues grow.
See there where Lot's apostate partner stands,
And backward throws her longing eyes and hands;
These eyes and hands, from whence warm life had fled,
The skillful artist marks as pale and dead.
Those cheeks which first a ruddy freshness show,
Fade while you look, and into paleness grow.
Part of her hair death seems in chains to bind,
And part appears to waver with the wind.
One foot seemed raised, resolved its load to bear,
And one seemed fixed by cogent fetters there.
Just half transformed, you viewed a double strife
'Twixt death's encroachments and expiring life,
Till by degrees she seems of breath bereft;
And while you gaze, no more of life is left.
Yet in her face, fear, anger, pity, strive,
As skillful artists make their marbles live.

Not far before, the good old man appears,
By angels hastened and his ruling fears—
The small remains of Sodom with him bears,
And moistens with his tears his silver hairs.
See them scarce lodged in little Zoar's walls,
Before from clouds the ruddy vengeance falls.
Big drops of flaming gold profusely spent,
The falling fire and brimstone represent.
See all aghast the criminals look pale
While flaming tides descend through Siddim's vale:
With fearful shrieks they seem to pierce the sky,
And half persuade you that you hear them cry,
Or ask for mercy they despised of late
And mourn for their inevitable fate.

Above, some Hebrew characters bestow
This just reflection on the piece below:
"Learn, mortals, hence, by this example given,
To dread the wrath of sin-avenging Heaven.
Here fiery lust was purged with hotter fire,—
In flames like these Gomorrah's sons expire."

While here they read old Sodom's fearful doom,
Martha and Mary to the banquet come.
Their twice-born brother every eye awakes
And all attention from the painting takes.

The modest youth a low obedience made,
And to his Lord a grateful homage paid;
Felt at his sight devotion warm his breast,

And all his soul in looks and words expressed.
Here on their seats each cheerful guest was placed,
Excepting Martha, who directs the feast;
And Magdalene, who fell with sighs profound,
And tears effused, in homage on the ground.
She with low rev'rence clasped the Saviour's feet,
Nor left that station but with much regret;
With deep contrition smote her heaving breast,
As though unworthy of the ground she pressed.
With her some costly essences she brings,
Which would have raised her in the eyes of kings,
When all her charms were dressed and spread to please
Abandoned man, who seeks licentious ease.
Full on his feet she poured the rich perfume,*
And all Arabia scatters round the room;
While from her eyes distils a grateful shower,
And flowing tears a richer fragrance pour.
Then with her ringlets, which, in curls displayed,
Had once for man delusive fetters made,
She wipes the sacred feet her hands embraced,
And spreads that essence some conceived a waste.
Iscariot said, "This cost had been employed
To better use if by the poor enjoyed."
Not that he felt the welfare of the poor,
His sordid aims were to increase his store;
For while pretending to afford relief,
His views were selfish — Judas was a thief.

Our Lord, who knew the workings of his mind,
Took up his speech just as it seemed designed;

*John xii. 3.

From painting by Plockhorst.

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

And, to enlarge their too contracted sight,
Spoke of his exit to impart new light.
"This precious ointment, which, with too much haste,
Has been," he said, "by some imputed waste,
Against my coming funeral is designed,
A mournful truth which all will quickly find.
Then as my Gospel spreads, it shall be showed,
How Mary paid the gratitude she owed."
The sad apostles hear these painful words,
And every breast the prophecy records;
Yet none the anguish of his soul expressed,
Or asked the Saviour to unfold the rest.

That night at pleasant Bethany they stay,
But take their leave on the succeeding day;
Thence to fair Bethphage Christ his footsteps bends,
Where gath'ring crowds proclaim themselves his friends.
See there the height to which his soul aspired!
See there the pomp which Salem's king desired!
On him no horse, no liveried servants wait,
To grace his triumph in a car of state.
A servile ass sustains th' incarnate Lord,*
By angels worshiped, and by saints adored.
Hence Rome's proud pontiff may this truth discern,
That he from Christ ambition did not learn.

See where the multitudes their homage pay,
And, as predicted, decorate his way.
Branches and clothes through all the paths are thrown,
And the palm's garments mingle with their own.[14]

*Matt. xxi; Mark xi; Luke xix. 29; John xii. 12.

[14] A custom among the Jews to spread their garments under

Thus while they move, from all their voices rise
Those loud hosannas which ascend the skies.
"Hail, Son of David," all their tongues declare,
And then hosannas rend again the air.
But soon these lips will urge a different cry,
And those who shout will clamor, "Crucify!"
Christ plainly knew, because he all things knows,
His fickle friends and his inveterate foes;
And through the whole perceived without dismay
The precious ransom which his life must pay.

From the hoarse tumults of the town and day
Jesus retired as night resumed her sway;
And while he thus the destined city leaves,
The town of Bethany its Lord receives.
Here was his couch by innocence prepared,
And watchful angels were that night his guard.

A hill there is which fronts with decent pride
Illustrious Solyma's bright eastern side,
With groves of olive crowned, and thence does claim
From time unknown its immemorial name;
Whose three degrees[15] each other higher bear,
Resembling regions in the ambient air.
From its proud top, if there spectators go,
They see the city and the clouds below.

---

great persons, as a high token of honor; and as it seems, a ceremony of inauguration, and due only to regal dignity; for thus did the captains to Jehu, when they agreed with God's way of disposal, and acknowledged him king. 2 Kings ix. 13.

[15] Mount Olivet consists of three degrees or risings.

A lovely vale creeps gently winding down,
And fills the space between the hill and town.
On its green breast deceitful Kidron[16] flows,
A torrent now, and now a rill it shows,
And when the earth, scorched by the solar beams,
Most wants its moisture, most it hides its streams;
True map of worldly joys! so short their stay,
So imperceptibly they glide away!
By Chemosh and by Moloch first it runs,[17]
And the wise king's disgraceful follies shuns:
Weakened by age, and by his wives betrayed,
Them first his idol, then their gods he made.
Due east it then a little villa leaves,
Which flows with oil, and thence its name receives.[18]
It stands alone, Gethsemane its name,
Well known to Christ, and still well known to fame.
Its sacred garden stretches by its side,
And forms the margin of the mountain's pride;

---

[16] Those who write of Palestine tell us that the brook Kidron, or Cedron, is little else than a mass of waters made out of rains which descend from Mount Olivet and Mount Moriah, between which it runs, separating them from each other, and falling thence into the vale of Jehoshaphat.

[17] See the melancholy history of Solomon's apostasy and idolatry in 1 Kings xi. 4, 5, 7. This hill fronts the Temple, and is before, or to the east of, Jerusalem, touching upon the north, being called to this day the Mount of Offense, or Scandal. Of Chemosh we have little in Scripture, but that he was the abomination of the Moabites, as Milcom or Moloch of the children of Ammon.

[18] This etymology is generally given of it; and the *Pilgrim* says, it is called to this day the Garden of Olives, from nine great olive trees still growing in it; though he places it on the lowest hill, and east of it; but Fuller, on the second to the northwest thereof, whom I follow.

Whose sweet recesses, pleasantly retired,
In native grandeur swell to be admired.
No barren walks, or beauties forced, appear
To torture nature and invert the year;
But verdant alleys through the vistas ran,
And wild luxuriance scorned the aid of man.
Here tranquil breezes sigh along the shade,
Which seems for prayer and meditation made.
Here in rich arbors fruitful olives grow,
And food and health and medicine bestow.
Here the triumphant palm, for victors made,
Decks the green walks with its projecting shade;
And though oppressed, this rival of the vine
In lonely deserts yields both fruit and wine.

Here, while mankind reposed in balmy rest,
Nor dreamt of joys which Christ and his possessed,
Ere heaven's fair lamp had made the shades retire,
And o'er the hills diffused his golden fire,
He with his twelve had frequently repaired,
Escorted safely by a heavenly guard.
Celestial love they contemplate and sing,
And mount to God on pure devotion's wing,
Enjoy what earth can neither take nor give,
And bask in glories which they taste, and live.

Love, genuine love, disdains its task to shun,
But glows with fervor, as a cloudless sun,
Lights up the torch of intellectual fires,
And with devotion all her sons inspires.
Oh, how distinct from that false flame we prize,

Which glows a moment, disappears, and dies!
The nobler passion of celestial love
Mounts from beneath, and grasps at scenes above;
Where holy souls in endless rapture burn,
And songs of praise incessantly return:
And as this globe which now appears so bright,
Rescued from chaos, shines with borrowed light,
Reflects those beams, and all their radiance bears
Back to the skies, to mingle with the stars;
So love divine, whose circles further run
Than that exhaustless source of light the sun,
And from the regions of unclouded day
With its fair seeds impregnates human clay,
From earth's vile shores solicits us to rise,
Claim our high birth, and reascend the skies.

Love, humbler here, and loftier there, we see,
Smile in a flower, and decorate a tree.
Convey its charms to Philomela's notes,
And burst in raptures from a thousand throats.
Earth, air, and ocean fragrant incense raise,
And teach forgetful man his Maker's praise.
The cheerful lark from yon green carpet springs,
Mounts like an eagle, like an angel sings:
Thence she surveys at the first opening dawn
Each smiling field and every gilded lawn,
Thence warbles forth her wild harmonious airs,
And Heaven accepts them as her praise and prayers.
With her each soul, whom heavenly ardors please,
Shakes off dull slumbers and inglorious ease,
Surveys the world which almost seems as bright

As when emerging from primeval night;
And while the smiling earth unfolds her stores,
Prostrate he falls and silently adores.

O thou great Efflux of the Light divine,
Sent to fulfill thy Father's great design!
Thus didst thou all thy happy morns improve,
Thou Height of power, of holiness and love.
Whether tall Tabor bent his head to meet
And welcome thither thy triumphant feet;
Or thou by hollow Kidron's doubtful spring
Didst with thy twelve celestial anthems sing,
The everlasting Father, looking down,
Dispatched his heralds all thy works to own,
Attentive angels on thy accents hung,
Smiled while they listened to thy heavenly tongue,
And every anthem in full chorus sung.
Nor are, great King, though all thy pains are o'er,
And thou art gone from earth's polluted shore,
Those scenes disdained where once thy prayers were poured
From hills and plains to heaven's Almighty Lord.
Who seeks in earnest may dismiss despair,
And in the means expect to find thee there.
Nor names nor places thy compassion bind,
Grace, like the air, extends to all mankind.

Almighty Goodness, I perceive thee here,
My busy heart foretold my Love was near.
Let earth recede, and all its wealth decline,
Peace still remains, if Christ and heaven be mine.

Oh suffer not his freedom to offend
Who fain would be, as well as called, thy friend!
Divine Redeemer! of a spotless maid
The spotless offspring! grant thy suppliant aid,
Who, ere the morning with light has decked the skies,
To thy bless'd palace lifts his longing eyes,
Whether on old Irene's angry seas,[19]
Near Mona's isle, or the blue Hebrides,
Or from the face of men removed away
In a mean cot composed of reeds and clay,
Where the inhospitable Humber roars
Devouring by degrees the neighboring shores,
Or by dear mother Isis stretched along,
Or father Thames, he tunes the sacred song;
Which, if thy name eternity can give
To distant ages yet unborn, shall live.

Return, my Muse, and sacred friendship sing,
That most divine, yet most forgotten thing.
To heavenly love thou virtue most allied
Of all that float on life's tempestuous tide!
But where, ah! where art thou in life expressed,
By vice unsullied,—but in Jesus' breast?
Now interest warps what mortals friendship call,
And selfish motives give a tinge to all.
The twelve apostles felt thy sacred flame,
And John sustained the loved disciple's name.
In all the actions of his soul we view
Love undiminished, friendship ever new.

[19] The Irish seas, about Anglesey, Man, etc., where the author began this work, since completed in several parts of England.

How closely knit! how intimately one,
His soul and Christ's the co-eternal Son!
What charms, what beauties in his features shine,
By love reflected from the face divine.
His eyes, his words, his gestures, and his air,
Combined to show his mind serene and fair;
Silent and deep as crystal waters flow,
Nor noise betrays the shoals which lurk below.

Of those whose ardor sometimes grew too bold,
Cephas appeared the foremost place to hold;
Like hasty Uzzah, when it seemed to nod,
His forward hand would prop the ark of God:
Weakness and warmth devotion's place supply,
And faith grew languid when his pulse was high.
Tinged with the old traditions of their land,
The holy books they could not understand.
Amidst their errors Christ was pleased to spare
His weak disciples, who but mortals were:
He knew attachment had their zeal betrayed,
And soon forgave those faults which love had made.
Zeal Peter felt in an undue degree,
Yet none performed or suffered more than he;
And though with keenness Christ sometimes reproved,
No one but John was more than he beloved;
For these and James were the illustrious three
Chosen to witness Christ's divinity.

Devotion ended, all to view the town
Forsook Mount Olivet, and hastened down;

For, always secret Christ disdained to dwell,
Or rob the world to grace a lonely cell —
Like him his servants, through their lives, designed
To spread his truth, and benefit mankind.
Their love, unbounded, no distinction knew,
Nor, fettered, shrunk to a contracted view;
And as the Saviour of the world had shown
Desires repenting Publicans to own,
So would their frequent conversation be
With worse than these — the haughty Pharisee,
Vain, supercilious, damning all beside,
Brimful of vice, of ignorance, and pride.
Lust sat enthroned upon his varnished face,
While outward rites preserved him from disgrace.
But as vile tares with the purest grain,
And heaps of rubbish seeds of gold contain,
So in the mass of this dissembling crew
Some few were virtuous, though they were but few —
Some, who their senses had refused to close
When first the Sun of Righteousness arose —
Within whose souls some glimmering knowledge glowed,
That Christ, though hated, was the Son of God;
And from the evidence which all received,
Some wished him such, and scarcely disbelieved.

Weak Nicodemus, who the Saviour saw,
Held prepossessions with religious awe:
Him sent from God he readily confessed,
And from his lips desired to learn the rest.
Yet as his faith could not endure the light,
He sought instruction from our Lord by night.

Gamaliel,[20] who in sacred science read,
Had with renown a blameless life displayed.
Mature in wisdom, would known truths receive,
But weighed their import ere he durst believe.
His name the Sanhedrim declared of note,
For much depended on his single vote.
To these was Joseph joined, for counsel famed,
Whose ancient birthplace once was Rama named;
But time and men, which blot, change, level all,
Old Rama now Arimathea call.
He near the town held a convenient seat,
Still and retired, without the pomp of state,
Not poorly mean, but suited to supply
The wants of nature, not of luxury.
Here borrowed streams from Siloam's neighboring well[21]
In pleasing showers advanced by art, and fell;
Perennial verdure decked the happy ground,
And fertile nature breathed her sweets around.
Here grew tall cedars, and triumphant palm,
And ancient Gilead's odoriferous balm:
This gum a native of Judea grows,
And in big tears of oily fragrance flows.
Here, with some friends retired, he wore away

---

[20] It is certain that our Saviour himself, as well as his disciples, conversed with several of the Pharisees, and sometimes ate with one of the chief of them. It is certain that Gamaliel was not very averse to his doctrine, from his discourse in the Acts concerning it. From whence it is not improbable that he might be present at those conferences concerning our Saviour.

[21] The well or fountain of Siloam rises at the northeast corner of Jerusalem, I think about five hundred paces from the foot of Calvary.

In pleasing converse half the sultry day;
Nor could these friends intruding vices fear,
Nor could intemp'rance hope to enter here;
For as the wise Egyptians at their feasts
Served up a skull before their cheerful guests,
So these around as grave mementos see,
And in their garden walk by Calvary.
Here death in triumph frowned,— and wisely there
Joseph had hewn himself a sepulcher.
And those like Joseph, virtuous, wise, and brave,
Dare to be cheerful while they view their grave.

Good Joseph here some happy hours enjoyed,
And in retirement thus his friends enjoyed
Their conversation, noble and refined,
With sacred truths instructed every mind.
The rules of justice, falsehood, wrong, and right,
Their various natures and their sterling weight;
What can be seen of God by reason's sight,
And what by revelation's clearer light;
What of himself enlightened Plato knew,
And what this sage from Hebrew fountains drew;
How short of their great prophet Plato came,
Who even to Gentile worlds extends his fame,
Whom happy Orpheus[22] on his tuneful lyre
Sung like those bards who dream the gods inspire;
What rules of life adorned his sacred law,
What distant truths their ancient sages saw;
These varied topics dwelt upon their tongues.
Which sometimes touched upon their country's wrongs;

[22] That Υδῆς is Moses, few question.

And that great Prince both promised and foretold
By all the holy oracles of old,
That great prophetic Shiloh, long designed
His groaning country's shackles to unbind.

The weeks of Daniel well they knew drew near,
When all believed Messiah would appear.
Hence they concluded from deliberate choice
Without a doubtful or dissenting voice,—
"If this the age of his appearance be,
The Son of David certainly is he."
His wondrous deeds without disguise they saw
Greater and more than what confirmed the law:
He spoke as never mortal spake before,
And practiced all his doctrines taught,— and more.
Hence from these evidences all declare
His claims decisive — reason held the chair.

Them thus employed the loved disciple found
In the calm limits of their happy ground,
Who with his brother and with Peter came,
Welcomed, invited, through the Saviour's name.
These, near fair Rama's or old Gideon's wall,
By Gilgal's, Jericho's, or Jordan's fall,
Joseph had seen the trembling fiends obey,
While Christ from thousands washed their sins away.
These when arrived, good Joseph warmly sought,
To teach his friends those truths their Master taught;
Describe his birth, his spotless life, his law,
And all those wonders which they heard and saw.
For now the fourth swift year declining ran,

The Life of Christ

Since Christ his public ministry began;
The actions, therefore, which had marked his course,
Furnished a pregnant and important source.
The lepers cleansed, the dead to vigor raised,
Which hosts had witnessed, which had all amazed,
Were facts so plain they held attention mute
And left no room for cavil or dispute.
What yet remained was bursting into birth —
His tragic exit from the guilty earth,
In which the Saviour all his life resigned,
And poured his precious blood to purchase all mankind.

Contents of the Second Book

St. Peter begins the relation of our blessed Saviour's life, which he opens with the accomplishment of Daniel's weeks, the sceptre's departing from Judah, and the tyranny of Herod. He then proceeds to the preparations for our Saviour's birth, the angel's salutation, etc., which he thereupon repeats at large, as Joseph, the husband of the blessed Virgin, had formerly to Zebedee and him. Joseph's character of her before their marriage; whom having obtained of her father Heli, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. His passion and various sensations thereupon, till admonished by an angel of her purity and innocence, and the manner of her conception. On which he asks pardon for his unjust censures, and desires her to give him an account of that miraculous transaction. The Virgin relates the appearance of the angel, his salutation, and her conception by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Joseph goes on and gives the character of a good wife in the blessed Virgin, and the history of his travelling with her to see their cousin Elizabeth, who, though old and barren, the angel had declared, should shortly have a child. The way to Geba, near which lived Zacharias and Elizabeth. The description of Zachary's pleasant seat, whom they find dumb at their arrival. The salutation of Elizabeth to the blessed Virgin. The birth and circumcision of John the Baptist; his father Zacharias

recovers his speech, and gives an account of the occasion of his strange silence, and the angel's prophecy concerning his son; his song from the first of St. Luke. Joseph and the Virgin return to Nazareth, and make preparations for her son's birth: whence being recalled by the edict of Augustus, they set out for Bethlehem: a description of the pleasant way thither, and of the most remarkable places on the road, Rachel's tomb, David's well, etc. They arrive at Bethlehem late at night, and can find no lodging. The birth of Christ approaches. Joseph's concern for the Virgin. He conducts her into a cave without the town. Our Saviour's birth. The angels attend him. The shepherds come to the cave early in the morning to adore him; and on Joseph's wondering how they heard the news, two young shepherds, Strephon and Claius, give him the relation, after they had sung a carol on the subject. The angel's song at the nativity. The presentation of our Saviour at the temple, where old Simeon finds him. Simeon's song. The testimony of Anna the prophetess: the journey of the three sages conducted by a star to Jerusalem, who inquire for the place of our Saviour's birth, which Herod, pretending devotion, asks of the Sanhedrim. Gamaliel remembers the event, and repeats their resolution drawn from the prophecy of Micah, that it was to be at Bethlehem. Thither Herod directs the sages, desiring they would let him know as soon as they found him, on pretense that he would follow and worship him. They find the infant, adore and present gifts to him; but, warned by a vision, return *incognito* to their own country, not calling at Jerusalem. Herod, being disappointed and enraged, orders

the murder of the innocents. Joseph is warned by an angel to flee into Egypt with the child and his mother. As they are going by night, they look back from a hill near the town, and by the light of the torches in the streets, discover the massacre of the infants. They then hasten to Egypt. The way thither. Sybrom Lake, tomb of Pompey. They pass by Babylon, and fix at Memphis. Observations on the Pyramids. The death of Herod. Their return, and retirement to Nazareth for fear of Archelaus, Herod's son. Our Saviour's behaviour in his childhood: his going to Jerusalem at the Passover with his parents, and disputation in the temple with the doctors and heads of the Sanhedrim, which Nicodemus calls to mind, observing that he presided in the schools at that time, and giving a character of our Saviour. St. John then gives them a character of Christ in his maturer years, and so affectionately describes him that Nicodemus is desirous to wait on him; and St. John offering to conduct him, the company break up, having appointed to meet again the next morning, in order to hear the rest of our Saviour's actions.

From painting by A. Melli.

THE ANNOUNCING ANGEL

The Life of Christ

BOOK II

A pause ensued when Rama's Lord[1] had done,
Till in the midst Barjona thus begun:
"Inspired with love for my great master's cause,
Whose life displays the spirit of his laws,
I speak with ardor on the side of truth,
And freely tell the virtues of his youth.
Indeed, your questions stimulate my zeal,
And urge my tongue his glories to detail:
Nor will you doubt the facts these lips must speak,
Which shall no rules of just decorum break.

"By foes acknowledged, and by friends admired,
By nations famed,[2] by ancient kings desired;
Prized by the learn'd, by prejudice confessed,
Revered by senates, and by saints caressed;
By reason owned, proclaimed by every sign,
By human faith and oracles divine,
The Saviour stands; the world attests his cause.
And myriads bow in homage to his laws.

[1] By Rama's Lord is meant Joseph of Arimathea.

[2] Famed, for we read of the fame of Jesus, Matt. iv. 24; Luke iv. 14, 37; and Matt. xiv. 1. Herod heard of the fame of Jesus; and in several other places. Nor were his miracles only known to the Syrians, Matt. iv. 24, the Phœnicians, Mark vii. 26, and afterward the Grecians, John xii. 20, but to the Romans also.

"You all allow those days are come, or near,
In which Messiah's kingdom must appear.
Those mystic weeks which heavenly Daniel saw,
Are dated from the giving of the law,
Which all, who read his prophecies, explain,
Must usher in the great Messiah's reign.
From these predictions, known to sacred fame,
We first obtain this more than human name.[3]
That time is past our rabbis all declare,[4]
And he is come, or mortals must despair.
Hear Israel's groans, behold their freedom broke,
And shoulders worn beneath a foreign yoke!

---

[3] See our learned Mede on Daniel's weeks, which he proves must be accomplished about the time of our Saviour's coming, whichever of the assigned epochs we take for their beginning. Indeed we have the very name of the Messiah from that prophet, Daniel ix. 25, 26, where he is called Messiah the Prince; and it is added, "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself."

[4] Malachi, having foretold that the Lord should suddenly come to his temple; the Jews having lost their legislative power; the weeks of Daniel being now accomplished; the Baptist also appearing in the spirit and power of Elias; and indeed, all the other prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah being completed, and all centering in this very time; it would be but very reasonable to suppose the rabbis did at that time publicly declare their expectation of him, though we had no positive proof for such an assertion. But yet further, it is not only plain, from the evangelists, that he was then generally expected by the whole nation of the Jews, and even by the Samaritans; but that even their great men expressed themselves freely to the same sense; thus old Simeon, whom some suppose a great rabbi among them; and Caiaphas, who prophesied very clearly even of the Messiah's sufferings. And Josephus confirms the same; plainly acknowledging that at that time some great Prince was, by an ancient tradition or

By Herod swayed, of Idumean birth.[5]
The friend of tyrants who disgrace the earth.
He, red with blood, old Esau's shame and stain,
Proves his descent by hosts enslaved and slain.
His pride, not piety, our temple raised,[6]
And God is named, that Herod may be praised.

---

prophecy, expected in the East, which, according to his usual flattery, he applies to Vespasian: with all which the modern Jews find themselves so pressed that they have been forced to own that the time when we know the Messiah did really come, was indeed that appointed for his coming; but it was delayed, they say, for the sins of the people. It is answered, the promise of the Messiah was absolute, and he was come to save his people from their sins, when the world was in a desperate condition, and, as one of the rabbis says, "filled with dogs, wolves, and goats, instead of men." Others of them say that he did then really come, but is not yet declared, or revealed, remaining all this time *incognito*. And a third sort, as I find it quoted by a learned person from their Bab Berachoth, say, that the Messiah was really born, and that of poor parents, and in the time of the latter temple, but was snatched away again for the sins of their nation; which is true enough, though not in the sense they intended. Nay, I find one of their rabbis, *Sam Marochianus de adventu Missiæ*, who goes further than any of these: "I dread and fear, O Lord," says he, "lest that Jesus who was slain by our fathers, and whom the Christians worship, should be that Righteous One, sold for silver, according to the prophet Amos."

[5] Herod the Great, generally supposed an Edomite, though some make him of Askalon.

[6] He enlarged, adorned, and as good as rebuilt the second temple, as Josephus relates, Antiq., lib. 15, cap. 14, which though some learned men have denied, as Eckius and Villapandus, yet one would think Josephus should best know, having so often officiated in it, and perhaps seen part of it building; nor does he at all flatter Herod, who was dead many years before he wrote, whatever he says of Vespasian. This temple was in truth a very magnificent structure. The main body of it was finished by Herod himself in eight years and a half, employing about a thousand carriages and

His sword with blood the blushing pavement dyes,
And God's High-Priest becomes his sacrifice:[7]
This horrid crime completes his foul disgrace,
And murder ends the Hasmonean race.

"Did not this wretch our bondage first begin,
When he invited the fierce Roman in?
Did not his hands their cursed eagles rear,
When proud Antonia[8] spread their wings in air?
Insult the temple his ambition raised,
And basely mock the God our fathers praised?
No more to legislate is Israel free;[9]
She scarce retains the name of liberty:

---

eleven thousand men; it was forty-six years before the whole was completed by the Jews, as they told our Saviour.

[7] John Hircanus, who was, if I mistake not, his father-in-law into the bargain. See Joseph. Antiq., lib. 6 and 7.

[8] Antonia was a castle built by Herod in honor of his friend Anthony, near the temple, at the northwest corner, on an inaccessible rock fifty cubits high; and the castle upon it was forty cubits more; it was four-square, with four towers at the corners, commanding all the temple, into which there were also secret passages from it. See the description of it, Joseph. Antiq., lib. 6, cap. 7. But not only the Roman banners, which the Jews looked upon as idols, and perhaps they were not mistaken, might offend the Zealots, when waving on the towers so near their temple; but Josephus says in his Antiq., lib. 17, cap. 18, "that Herod did really erect a golden eagle, of an almost inestimable value, on the very portal of the temple; which Judas and Matthias, two brave young men, and zealous for their law, were so much offended at, that they got their friends together, and cut it all to pieces with their swords and axes, though it cost many of their lives."

[9] This seems the most natural interpretation of the sceptre's departing from Judah; that is, the legislative power, which till now remained with those two tribes that returned from captivity.

Her sons, oppressed, are servile clients made,
And all their wealth is drained for foreign aid.
The shattered remnants of the public spoils
This robber left us to reward our toils.
You know our bold, our unsuccessful fight,
But desp'rate stand, beneath the Gaulonite;
What numbers perished in the glorious strife,
Through patriot virtue or contempt of life;
What floods of gore forsook our heroes' veins
To dress the soil and dye their native plains.

"While these commotions ravaged all the land,
David's descendants, born to give command,
Who should have exercised a royal sway,
Had learned, like Christ, to suffer and obey.
From these the public voice his parents named;
And, though reduced, allowed his lineage famed:
And hence opinion scrupled not to own
The legal heir of Israel's vacant throne:
Since both his parents drew from David's line
A right to reign which some esteemed divine;
While either house a clear succession brings
Of honored prophets or acknowledged kings.

"But ah! what alterations time has made,
From David's sceptre to a servile trade!
Joseph, reduced, by labor earned his bread,
And by his toils his little household fed:
But in this stage permit me to declare
How first I learned who Christ's forerunners were.
Yet all the wonders I proceed to show,
Are best attested by those deeds you know;

And but for these some truths you would receive
Hard to relate, but harder to believe.
But those who see what fills the list'ning earth,
Will credit prodigies which marked his birth:
Nor will your judgments think my language wrong,
While I relate what dropped from Joseph's tongue;
Oft have I heard the good old man repeat
When half reclined upon an oozy seat
Against the sounding beach in peace we lay
To taste the breeze which closed the scorching day,
The wond'rous miracles which marked his life,
Urged him to take, and to suspect his wife.
Once I remember in the evening air,
When he and I and Zebedee were there,
We pressed him all to tell us what he knew
Of that conception all acknowledged true.
He gave consent, and, leaning on his side,
Drew this description of himself and bride:—

"Know then, he said, when youth's fresh blossoms past
Had brought of seven sabbatic years the last,[10]
Advised by friends, I sought a virtuous wife
To share the fortunes and fatigues of life.
From all that Nazareth had counted fair,
And many virgins bloomed in beauty there,

[10] Joseph, it is probable, was a middle-aged person at the time of his marriage. The sabbatic year is either the seventh year, or seven years, a week of years: suppose him then born in the last of the first sabbath, or the very seventh, or sabbatic year, he might be now something above forty.

Old Heli's daughter far outshone the rest,[11]
And all her image on my soul impressed.
From the same source our kindred blood we drew,
And our descent can be unknown to few.
From David he by Nathan brings his line,
And I by Solomon deducing mine.
As joined the roots, so now the branches join,
And, though obscure, the impulse seemed divine.
Gladly he gives what I as gladly take,
And both well pleased the solemn contract make.
But rivals sought to snatch her from my breast,
And envy thought me too supremely bless'd.
Her virtuous fame engrossed the public voice,
And all united to applaud my choice.

"Judge then the anguish of my laboring breast,
When in my arms the lovely maid I pressed.
Frozen with horror, stupid with amaze,
I gazed, suspected, and renewed my gaze;
Believed and doubted, disbelieved and feared
The grave in which I saw my hopes interred.
Thus he who holds a serpent in his arms
Forgets its poison to admire its charms;
Sees it unfold its deleterious spring,
And with its fangs inflict a mortal sting;
Then as the venom rankles in his veins,
He spurns the reptile, while he writhes with pains.
Thus did I feel the intellectual sore
In due proportion as I loved before.

[11] Heli is said to have been the father of the blessed Virgin. See *Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History*.

"Struck with such proofs as would not let me err,
I felt indignant at her sex and her;
While love and vengeance in my soul debate,
But love detained me, though I strove to hate.
Resolved at length, if possible to part,
And extricate my too-deluded heart,
To tear by force her perjured image thence,
Already blasted by lost innocence,
I left the room in darkness and despair
To shun those tears which flowed to keep me there;
But feeling rev'rence for her father's fame,
I labored to conceal her guilt and shame,
To wait awhile for some convenient hour,
And then in private put her from my door.*

"Determined thus, I rushed in haste away,
And on the ground a widowed bridegroom lay;
There mourned my fate (for gentle sleep had fled)
With restless thoughts upon a thorny bed,
And in those shadows which preclude the light
In sighs and groans prolonged the tedious night.
Twice had the cheerful harbinger of day
Marked the dull hours to chase the shades away,
When grief exhausted left my flowing eyes,
And sudden slumbers seized me by surprise.
Thus sunk in sweet forgetfulness of grief,
A cordial powerful to yield relief,
Around my head some beaming glories play,
Which seemed a prelude to eternal day.

---

*Matt. i. 19.

I then beheld a glorious watcher sent,*
For nothing less it proved by the event.
His purple wings dispelled the morning shade,
And gave me comfort by the light they made.
Then, while his voice and looks assailed my heart,
His heavenly accents did these truths impart:—

"'Illustrious branch of Jesse's noble stem,
And heir of David's throne and diadem,
What thoughts disconsolate, or restless fear,
From thy fair bride detain thee mourning here?
Her soul is free from those unchaste desires
Or guilty deeds which fan unholy fires.
As for the root of all thy jealous cares,
The sacred burden which the virgin bears,
The Holy Spirit did the gift infuse,
And sent an angel to impart the news
To her and thee,—and ere the changing moon
Five courses more, renewed with light, has run,
Her womb shall teem with an illustrious birth,
That brings salvation to the sinful earth.
His name is JESUS, sacredly designed
A mighty Saviour to redeem mankind.'

"Thus having said, the angel disappears;
But all he uttered sounded in my ears.
In unknown paths my understanding roved
Between the vision and the maid I loved.
Roused from my couch, in trembling haste I come

---

*Matt. i. 20.

With sacred horror to the nuptial room,
And, like a statue frozen at the door,
Beheld the object whom I loved before.
Here Joseph's warmth some tender things expressed,
A lover's feelings must describe the rest.

"Awakened Mary lay dissolved in tears,
And stretched her hand to dissipate my fears.
Thus the sweet rose new paints its lovely hue,
When bending with big drops of morning dew!
Thus Mary's beauties stood afresh displayed,
And gathered lustre from the tears she shed!
Nearer I drew, solicitous to know
If joy or grief had made these sluices flow,—
If sorrow softened her dear weeping eyes,
Or her rapt soul dissolved in ecstasies.
For, since the vision, these my thoughts employ,
But faith afforded me a source of joy.
On my approach, the blush that decked her face,
I soon discerned, was all from pow'rful grace;
While the soft moisture which her eyes impart,
Came from those raptures which she felt at heart.

"A mutual pause succeeded, ere to break
The awful silence she assayed to speak.
She then conjured me, if I held her dear,
To wait with patience her defense to hear.
Insist no more, I cried, on thy defense,
For Heaven vouchsafes to clear thy innocence.
An angel-form, not Mary's self more fair,
Did all the secrets of thy soul declare,

And in a vision of the recent night,
Put my suspicions and my fears to flight.
Then dry those tears, and henceforth cease to grieve,
For he who censured asks thee to forgive.

"'Then Heaven,' she cried, 'has shown what I concealed;
The mighty secret is at last revealed,
Which would require, should I attempt to tell,
To gain belief another miracle.'

"By our chaste loves, I said, much injured fair,
And by this offspring thou art bless'd to bear,
Disclose thy soul, nor my suspicions fear,
Since Heaven instructs me strange events to hear.
And if my judgment does not lead me wrong,
A train of miracles must guide thy tongue.

"'Know then,' she said, 'three moons are fully gone,
Indeed the fourth is swiftly rolling on,
Since in my father's house I sat engaged,
Revolving on the great event presaged,
When some great monarch of mysterious birth
Shall raise a kingdom and reform the earth.
This promised Prince, this Heaven's Almighty Heir,
Engrossed my thoughts, and strangely claimed my care;
Who faith, and truth, and justice should maintain,
And bless all nature with his peaceful reign;
When streams of honey from the rocks shall flow,
And palms and roses in the desert grow.
Supremely blessed I thought and counted her,

Who at her breast the Prince of Life should bear;
And pleased, I fancied humble gifts to bring
To greet and decorate the infant king;—
Thought, if I might within my arms enfold,
Or in his cradle innocently bold
Seize the young hero, shelter him from harms,
Kiss his soft cheeks, and gaze upon his charms,
No monarch's consort should my rival prove
In grateful songs, felicity, and love.

"'While musing thus, a tide of glory came,
And filled my chamber with celestial flame.
Then from the skies a youth, with sunbeams crowned,
Perfumed the air, and cast his smiles around.
He seemed more lovely than the race of man,
And having bowed, his message thus began:
"Hail, highly favored, blessed with truth and grace,*
By heaven selected from the human race;
Who, nobly honored, must that mother prove
Whom thou so lately didst admire and love.
Nor needst thou blush at what my lips declare;
Thy virgin womb the infant God must bear,—
That promised Prince who shall the world regain,
And over all his Father's empire reign.
Nay, do not ask how this can be performed,
For I perceive thy chastity alarmed;
A power divine shall prove my message true,
And power omnipotent can wonders do.
The Holy Ghost, the quintessence of love,
Shall breath conception on thee from above.

*Luke i. 26.

Thy holy offspring JESUS shall be named,
By saints revered, by distant ages famed.
Thus God appears in human flesh confined,
And thus becomes the Saviour of mankind.
But if thy faith demand some evidence,
Indulgent heaven has sent the proof from sense.
Thy aged cousin,[12] who in deep despair
Long sighed like Sarah to embrace an heir,
In silver locks at length is pregnant grown,
And in three months shall strangely bear a son.
Truth guides my tongue; the facts which I have given
Shall be accompanied by the hand of heaven."

"'He said, and paused: I hastened to reply,
When lo! his pinions bore him to the sky.
Amazed, I viewed, as o'er the clouds he trod,
This strange but sacred messenger of God,
And cried, My faith I can no more suspend
At what my reason can not comprehend.
Be God's decrees fulfilled without delay,
Let him command, his handmaid shall obey.

"'Scarce had I spoke and Gabriel disappeared,
Ere a delightful whispering sound I heard,
Like what a solitary ear perceives
When gentle breezes fan the velvet leaves.
Again celestial fragrancies perfume
And scatter paradise around the room.
Thus far I know, but can no more explain;

[12] Elizabeth.

Nor can we want what heaven does thus detain.
But this I know, that from some secret cause
Which seems subversive of all nature's laws,
Grew this strange burden now so plain to see,
Which Heaven, its author, has revealed to thee.'

"She said: I saw her to my arms denied,
A virgin mother and a virgin bride;
And from that hour, to bless my humble life,
The friend and lover centered in the wife.

"If closely viewed in her domestic state,
Her private virtues make her truly great.
Yet still I bore an undisputed sway;
'T was not her task, but pleasure, to obey—
But rarely wrong in what she did or said,
And my delight was her chief study made.
Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,
Or use my power but to display my love.
And as her soul no angry passions tossed,
My heart restored what hapless Eve had lost;
And where dominion yields to mutual flame,
To ask or take exactly means the same.
All my commands were favors in her hands,
And her requests to me were all commands.
Her house was sacred, and devoid of views
To prate and gossip, tell, and gather news:
She rarely wandered, never but with me,
Except on business, or on charity.

"The great occasions we have just surveyed
Soon from our home called forth the holy maid;

For friendship's bonds and nature's ties unite,
And both to old Elizabeth invite,
Whose new entreaties urged us to consent,
And I and Mary to her cottage went.

"On journeying hence we soon Bethulia leave,
When Kishon's fords our weary feet receive.
Thence fatal Gilboa's lofty cliffs we crossed,[13]
Where David's much lamented friend was lost.
Then Ephraim's lot we traversed, and came down
Near the new walls of Shemir's ancient town.[14]
Here Shechem lay, where Jacob deigned to dwell;
Near Dothan's plain, and Sychar's famous well;
And Gerizim's proud altar, raised in spite,
Accurs'd to every faithful Israelite.
By Bethel next and Jericho we passed,
Or left the first, and travelled through the last;
And the third noon, where gentle Siloam falls,
Perceived before us Salem's sacred walls,
Which leaving on the left, our course we bend
To little Geba, where our travels end.

"Full on our view, contiguous to a wood,
The pleasant house of Zacharias stood,
'T was neat, not proud,—designed for use, not fame,
Such as ambition might despise or blame;
Adapted well to entertain a guest,
Such as became a humble country priest.

---

[13] The reason of this epithet is assigned in the next verse.

[14] Samaria, first named from Shemir, of whom its ground was bought. Long after it was rebuilt by Herod, and called Sebaste.

"Around his house rich fields of glebe remained,
Which avarice stole, and sacrilege detained;
For Geba's suburbs to the priests were given
By ancient prophets as the will of Heaven.
But these the reigning tyranny devour,
And time gives sanction to the strides of power.
He felt his loss, and mourned to see the crime,
But only pitied those who injured him.
The small estate on which he lived supplied
His various wants, but luxury denied;
In pious deeds he all the surplus spent,
And Heaven protected what its favors lent.
Before the gate in gentle murmurs run,
Gilt by the beamings of the rising sun,
A crystal stream, which from the mountainside
In loud cascades became the valley's pride.
The west a fair and spacious prospect yields
Of woody foliage and luxuriant fields.
The bleak north wind the mountain's top arrests,
And shields the cottage with its crescent breasts:
While olive groves from southern heats defend.
And shade, and fruit, delight and profit blend.
And in those places where the hill inclines,
'T is richly mantled with productive vines.

"Thither arrived, we mutually embraced,*
And both the guests were at the table placed;
When such plain viands as their fields afford,
As quickly spread the hospitable board;
And every sign which silence could convey,

*Luke, 1:40.

Bade us as welcome as the orb of day.
For, strange to tell, our aged host was dumb,
As if interred within the silent tomb;
And all the reason we could hear assigned,
Still left some shadows to obscure the mind:
For in the temple, where he tarried long,
Some unknown cause had confined his tongue.

"But first Elizabeth to meet us ran,
And to the virgin thus inspired began:
'Blessed above women shall thy title be,
And yet more bless'd thy wond'rous child than thee.
Why should the mother of my Saviour grace
With condescension such an humble place?
For know, no sooner did my ravished ear
The sound of thy melodious accents hear,
Than by some impulse my prophetic boy
Leaped in my womb to testify his joy.
And bless'd is she whose noble faith, like thine,
Expels all doubt of truth and power divine;
Speedy performance shall thy wishes crown,
And future ages spread thy fair renown.'
Thus having said, they mutually embrace,
While tears of gladness steal from either face.
Her voice to Heaven the pious virgin raised,
And God in songs of holy triumph praised.
Then in an anthem both their portions bore,
And in low rev'rence mutually adore.

"These more than friendly salutations paid,
With old Elizabeth awhile we stayed;

Till thrice we saw revolving Cynthia wane,
And thrice replenish her fair orb again;
When the fair matron felt a mother's throes,
That fruitful source of happiness and woes.
But her sharp pangs were recompensed with joy,
When in her arms she pressed the lovely boy.
Her anxious kindred sat around her bed,
And all rejoiced to see her dangers fled;
And when the eighth auspicious morning smiled,
Hastened with joy to circumcise the child;
Then to the infant gave the father's name,
Prop of his age, his fortune, and his fame,
And prayed devoutly that his soul might be
Heir of his virtues, grace, and piety.

"The mother seemed attentive to their choice,
But heard his name with this dissenting voice,—
'The will of Heaven forbids you to proceed;
It must be *John*, for God has so decreed.'
Her wond'ring friends expostulate in vain,
For all their efforts no advantage gain.
The father heard, and with his eyes and hands
A style and tablet from his friends demands,[14]
Then in the ductile wax disclosed his breast,
And the same name the mother gave, impressed.
We, all amazed at this obscure event,
Paused to resolve what this decision meant.
But while we sought for causes unexplored,
His long lost speech was suddenly restored.

[14] The ancient way of writing among most nations.

Facts so amazing all our wonder raise
And turn our questions into bursts of praise.
With grateful joy our tuneful voices sung,
And Zach'ry's house with hallelujahs rung.
At length we ask, on his reply intent,
What his strange speech, but stranger silence meant?
He sighed, and smiled, our anxious questions weighed,
And thus complied with the request we made: —

"'Called by my priestly agency to bring
And offer incense to all nature's King
While Israel's hosts without the temple bend,
I saw great Gabriel in the flame descend.
Upon the altar his right hand he placed,
The other raised me from the ground I pressed.
"Thy God," he said, "has heard thy ceaseless prayer,
And thou, though hoary, shalt embrace an heir.
His name is *John*, and songs of holy mirth
Shall fill thy cottage at his wond'rous birth.
He, dear and great in God's impartial sight,
An abstinent devoted Israelite,
Divine illapses daily shall receive,
To fill his soul with peace which Heaven will give.
And when prepared with an enlightened mind,
And rendered holy for the work assigned,
His thundering voice shall sound a loud alarm,
And wake the vile from sin's delusive charm.
Then crowds of penitents their crimes shall mourn,
And, finding mercy, to their God return,
On faith's strong pinions pierce the yielding shade,

And grasp those glories which shall never fade.
Thus shall the prophet mark the Saviour's way,
As morning stars proclaim approaching day."

"'He soon perceived the truths I heard him tell
Had made his pupil half an infidel;
Then on his face such frowning aspect wore
As ne'er disfigured his fair form before;
Then said — "Since Heaven must speak to man in vain
Nor credit to its oracles obtain,
At once experience truth and power divine,
And be thyself unto thyself a sign.
Till thy despaired but promised blessing come,
I seal thy lips — At God's command, be dumb."

"'Trembling I knelt, and would have mercy cried,
But all address my falt'ring tongue denied.
The Angel nods, well knowing what I meant,
Then back to Heaven in clouds of incense went.
With mental prayer I straight the throne addressed,
But felt those shackles which his voice impressed;
Which now removed, my speech returns again,
And frees my organs from their heavy chain.
Since Heaven has thus restored my absent voice,
Let endless goodness be its happy choice!
Awake, my lyre; I strain each tuneful string,
And lift that voice which he has taught to sing.

THE SONG OF ZACHARIAS.

I.

"'Great God of Israel! how shall we thy laud express,
And, never satisfied with praises, bless?
Unutterable Goodness! how shall we
For those innumerable blessings pay
Of this triumphant, happy day,
And what so largely we receive, restore to thee?
Thou hast thy chosen flock with gracious eyes sur-
And visited with thine Almighty aid! [veyed,
A great redemption for us wrought,
Miracles surpassing thought!
Surpassing those, when, wandering wide
By Nilus and Euphrates' side,
Thou sav'dst us from Egyptian pride!
Those only types of this have been;
They were from slavery saved, but we from sin.

II.

"'Thee will we praise, thee will we sing,
We'll sing with ardent love and awful fear;
Who hast to Zion brought a great Deliverer,
A mighty Saviour, and a mighty King.
That promised branch of Jesse's sacred stem,
Heir of his Father's diadem;
Whom many ancient sages did descry
Through the mysterious glass of prophecy
In the vast heaven of dark futurity.
They saw his day, though far removed,
And seeing, smiled, and smiling, loved:

They saw great Judah's kingly Lion rouse,
And his loved nation's cause espouse.
Vainly whole troops against him rise;
  This vainly fights, and that as vainly flies;
From their stern jaws he tears away
The more than half-devoured prey,
And rends and tramples all our enemies.

III.

"'Which of you shall my lofty numbers grace,
Ye great forefathers of the chosen race?
Thee, father Abraham, first I 'll sing
From whose bless'd loins so many nations spring,
  The favorite friend of Heaven's Almighty King!
He gave his oath, and thou thy son,
When the bless'd gospel league begun:
Offensive and defensive 't is,
His enemies are ours, and ours are his:
  His sacred truth he did to witness take,
While his strong words the solid centre shake, [sake,
While heaven and earth remained, he never would for-
But guide the faithful through the paths wherein
  Forever walk sweet peace and innocence;
    All mischief ever banished hence,
  All guilt and danger far removed,
  All that by him is disapproved,
  And fear, the child of sin.

IV.

"'Nor thee, thou strange prophetic boy,
  By Heaven inspired ere thou did'st come
From the dark closet of the womb,
Thy aged parents' wonder, and their joy:

Thee, though unsung, unheeded yet
  Midst crowds of heroes, will the muse forget;
  Thee, who the happy news shalt bring,
  The harbinger of Heaven's high King;
  The banners of his grace display
  To scatter pardons all the way.

"'He comes, he comes: I see him swift advance;
  He comes to our deliverance:
  I see his orient light arise,
  Scattering ten thousand suns around the skies:
    It flashed through chaos, whose wild surges fell,
  As when the first strange day was made.
  The fiends were all of a new world afraid, [hell.
  And wide it glared through all the inmost caves of
  If there it moved their dread, but not their love,
    What wonders shall it not perform above?
  Sin to th' abyss shall sink again;
  Death, the great slayer, shall himself be slain,
  And truth and heaven-born peace forever reign.'

"Thus sung the holy patriarch, while we
Listened with joy, entranced with ecstacy;
Perceived their bliss unmixed with base alloy,
And in our hearts partook the parents' joy.
These triumphs finished, we prepared to come
To pleasant Nazareth, our native home;
And on arriving from our lengthened stay,
Recounted scenes which met us by the way,
In this small city fixing our abode
To wait the birth of the incarnate God.

"Since first we left our native home, the sun
Through heaven's blue concave three whole moons had
run;
Each moment therefore warned us to prepare
Our little cot for Heaven's Almighty Heir.
Yet as the virgin felt his birth draw near,
Her hopes revived to dissipate her fear.
Our little income all our wants supplied.
But left no food for vanity or pride.
Yet these conveniences obtained with care
Some adverse causes would not let us share.
A Roman edict interdicts our stay,
And us to Beth'lem urged without delay,
The ancient seat of David's royal line,
The lovely virgin's origin and mine.
This powerful edict all before me know,
And Rome despises to relax her law.

"'T was at a time when angry storms were spent,
And nature smiled to favor the event,
That for our tedious journey we prepare
Beneath the influence of the balmy air.
The furious tempests seemed involved in sleep,
And gentle breezes only kissed the deep.
Departing winter grew serene and mild,[15]

---

[15] Divines have differed much concerning the time of the year when our Saviour was born, But it does not much affect me, whether our Saviour's birth was in December, September, March, or whatever month besides; being extremely well satisfied that I have one day appointed, whereon to celebrate the memory of that greatest blessing which God ever gave to man.

Put on smooth looks and on creation smiled:
While in our way officious nature strews
The blue-eyed violet and blushing rose;—
While all the flowers which decorate the spring,[16]
Her liberal hands in rich profusion bring.
Walking from Naz'reth's garden of delight,
Hermon and Tabor rise before our sight;
Our passage then across some streams we take,
Which lose themselves in the Tiberian lake;
And through a well-known road came gladly down
On the third night to Salem's sacred town.
Our due devotions in the temple paid,
The night and morn we in the city stayed,
But left our friends in the decline of day,
And with discourse beguiled the tedious way.
At length when Beth'lem's turrets we espied,
I felt strong pleasures through my bosom glide,
Which still increased as we our path pursued,
And all our prospects of distress subdued.
But as the light its glimm'ring rays withdraws,
When Rachel's tomb on our right hand arose,

---

[16] The end of winter is the beginning of the spring; and for the flowers at that time growing wild in Palestine, see Eugene Rogier, who lived some time in the very convent of Nazareth, as I find him quoted by Walker in his life of Christ, p. 79, sec. 102. "This city of Nazareth," says he, "is well called a flower; for I might affirm, that having run through many realms, and viewed many provinces in Asia, Africa, and Europe, I never saw any comparable to this of Nazareth, for the great number of fair and oderiferous plants and flowers which grow wild there throughout *all the seasons of the year;* for from December to April, all the little hills, fields, and waysides are enameled with anemonies, hyacinths, etc.," and Surius to the same sense, and almost in the same words.

Each place of fame the holy maid I showed,
Where'er our optics could command the road.
From yonder well, I said, those waters went
Which three stern heroes brought to David's tent.
'T was there, when young, he kept his flocks,— and there
Slew the rough lion and the shaggy bear.
When lo! she shrieked, and clasped me to her breast,
And sighing begged me to conceal the rest.

"The night had now her sable mantle spread,
And birds in silence sought their mossy bed:
The grazing beasts were stretched within their lair,
And drowsy bats enjoyed the tranquil air,
When we fatigued, to Beth'lem's suburbs come*
To be enrolled in our paternal home;
But on approaching found ourselves too late
To gain admission ere they shut the gate:
And crowds, like us, in expectation stay
To mourn their lot or wait returning day.
To gain some shed we every effort try,
Till the dull moon discovered midnight nigh,
But found no friend to mitigate our woe,
Or wipe those tears which now began to flow.
Harassed with fears, with recent toils oppressed,
Without refreshment or a place to rest,
We searched the suburbs, but we searched in vain,
For disappointment added to our pain.

"But new occasions gave new stings to woe,
And all our fears in new directions flow.

* Luke ii. 4.

My lovely partner felt that moment near,
Which in our state was terrible to bear:—
So near, it threatened to precede the day,
And which, like death, admitted no delay.
My swelling heart I could no more suppress,
But in these strains discovered my distress:
'O my distracted breast! forlorn and poor,
Repelled from each inhospitable door;
Strangers, benighted, tired, with hunger faint,
And shut indignant from the home we want;
Still more than all, and what I least can bear,
She whom I love must feel the greatest share.
O false philosophy which says—relief
May be obtained by sympathy in grief.
Instead of this, its strokes more keenly fall,
When each feels each, and bears the weight of all.'

"Meanwhile her bosom seemed to Heaven resigned,
And no alarm disturbed her pious mind.
No sigh repining, no impatient word
Dropped from her lips to vilify her Lord;
But from her tongue these two expressions flow,
'It must be best, for Heaven will have it so.
We must not murmur nor unjustly grieve;
For he who made us, bids us to believe.'
Shamed by the kind reproof, I soon repressed
My wayward thoughts, and tranquilized my breast;
Then to a well-known cavity repaired,[17]

[17] Walker's account of it is this, p. 26, sec. 27: "It is," says he, "a place of common receipt on the east side of Bethlehem, without the town. made in a hollow rock, as is usual for stables in

And all its horrors to the dews preferred.
A cave it was where cattle found repose,
And grief retired to dissipate its woes,
In storms a refuge to the shivering swain,
When sudden sleet comes driving o'er the plain;
But whether hewn by labor in the stone,
Or formed by nature, was to us unknown.
Some vagrant reeds I gathered at the gate,
Which, mixed with stubble, formed her bed of state.
These to the virgin for a couch I gave,
Placed in the inmost corner of the cave.
Such pomp did David's Royal Heir assume,
Such was the furniture, and such the room:
The rest a choir of modest angels brings,
But veil their faces with their purple wings.

"The moon had now with beams of borrowed light
In her pale chariot made the noon of night.
Nor human voice nor grazing beast we hear,
But rising vapors chilled the midnight air.
Faint did the lamp on neighboring Edar burn,[13]

that rocky country, where was a manger also cut out of the stone. Surius says, that about the year 326, the Empress Helena built a stately church over this cave, which remains to this day; the cave or grot itself being under the choir. The very place where tradition says the blessed Virgin was delivered, being covered with a handsome white marble, in the middle of which is inlaid a green jasper, of about a span in diameter, round which jasper is a circle of gold, in form of a sun, with four rays of several colors, made of diamonds, rubies, granites, and other precious stones; in the circle are graven in capital characters these words: HERE WAS BORN JESUS CHRIST OF THE VIRGIN MARY."

[13] The watch-tower at Edar, in the fields of Bethlehem, northeast from the town.

From painting by La Rolle.

THE NATIVITY.—VISIT OF THE SHEPHERDS

For lazy fogs obscured its glimmering urn.
The drowsy stars in sluggish motion roll,
Suspend their courses, and arrest the pole.
Pensive I sat, and closed my weary eyes;
But anguish, slumber to my lids denies.
Yet strange to tell! by Heaven it seemed impressed,
Sleep for some moments stole upon my breast.
But soon a light of supernatural birth,
Brighter than this which now illumes the earth,
Through my closed eyelids forced a piercing ray,
And roused my senses where entranced I lay.
Trembling I wake, and with surprise behold
The cave all deluged with ethereal gold,
With beaming glories too refined for sense,
And forms celestial half departing thence.
In Mary's arms I saw the infant lie,
And mercy beaming from his heavenly eye;
While rays of glory from his temples pour,
And other streams of modest light devour.
I kneel adoring, and my tongue employ,
And lift my eyes to testify my joy.
But soon I rose impressed with sudden fear;
For at the cave I heard some footsteps near;
Some sounds confused loud conversation yield,
Like that of rustics hastening to their field.

"To shield my charge I hied me to the gate,
And in the passage either stood or sate.
But guess my wonder, when at length I spy,
Just as the morn began to gild the sky,
A troop of shepherds, harmless, meek, and mild,

By Heaven directed to the new-born child;*
Who, bowing low, with earnestness inquire
For Israel's monarch and the world's Desire.
Amazed, I asked how they the news had heard,
Ere day had dawned, or visitor appeared?
When two young men who could relate it best,
With chaplets crowned, made answer for the rest:
Claius, who lately the lewd town had left,
Of his romantic, foolish hopes bereft,
Whom bounteous Heaven, with all he valued dear,
Indulged in peace with his Urania here:
Strephon, who did with modesty pretend
To be, and was, till vice prevailed, his friend;
For since this time, on many a vain pretense
He left the plains and lost his innocence.
And now his soul, devoid of every grace,
Appears as steeled and hardened as his face,
Foul as those loathsome brands his body bears,
And black as that dissembling robe he wears.
His flagrant vice deceitful garments shroud
To veil the eyes of the deluded crowd.
I saw him lately too ambitious grown
His once loved *Claius* or himself to own.
Among the priests the title which he bears
Is Malchi — suited to the garb he wears.
With these associates daily he blasphemes
The Lord of glory, at whose death he aims.
Alas! how changed! When innocent and young,
With *Claius* thus Christ's birth he sweetly sung:

---

*Luke 11: 8–18.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY THE SHEPHERDS.

STREPHON.

"'How, Claius, are we dumb with joy?
Come, tune thy pipe to carols sweet:
Let's welcome the celestial boy,
And throw our garlands at his feet.'

CLAIUS.

"'I have a lamb as pure as snow,
Which my Urania smiling gave;
Yet this shall to his altars go,
Nor shall her eyes the victim save.'

STREPHON.

"'Mistaken swain! he ne'er requires
That with such off'rings we should part:
Go, give him pure and fair desires,
And praise him with a humble heart.'

CLAIUS.

"'Then all my hopes and all my fears
I'll to their ancient Lord restore,
And all my sighs and all my tears:
His love obtained, I ask no more.'

"In strains like these their arts the shepherds tried,
When to my question *Claius* thus replied:—

"'In yonder plain that stretches by the flood,
Near Edar's tower to guard our flocks we stood.
To cheer the night we joined our varied powers,

And soothed by turns with songs the midnight hours.
Of ancient heroes some with tales proceed,
Who grasped the sword, or touched the trembling reed:
Great Jacob's travels these with warmth relate,[19]
And these examine Reuben's crime and fate,
Infer strong cautions and impart advice
To guard those avenues which lead to vice.
Others extol the Euphratean swain
Who stretched Goliah on the groaning plain;—
Tell how Philistria mourned her champion dead,
And how, confused, her vanquished armies fled;—
How valiant David fought, and loved, and sung,
And how the valleys with his praises rung.

"'While thus employed beneath the cloudless sky,
The cock's shrill notes proclaimed the morning nigh.
We heard the sound, and saw each midnight star
Shoot oblique rays across the tranquil air;
Surveyed with pleasure the decline of night,
And hailed the prospect of approaching light.
Old Ægon, starting with amazement, cries,
"See, shepherds, see, descending from the skies
Yon radiant light, resembling solar flame,
Or other beams I have not words to name.
It seems a prodigy of vast intent,
To burn the world or mark some strange event.
From its new course it can not be the sun,
For night has yet some tedious hours to run.
Instead of mounting, it with speed descends,

[19] A probable subject for their songs and discourses, it being in this very place where he pitched his tent. Gen. xxxv. 21.

And to our tents its wond'rous journey bends."
He, trembling, paused, though more he meant to say;
For soon the light diffused a flood of day.
The ewes arose, and into flocks divide,
The little lambs ran bleating by the side.
Our faithful dogs their sudden fears betrayed,
And none besides my old *Lycisca* bayed.
We prostrate fell, as it diffused its rays,
Nor could sustain the splendor of the blaze.
When lo! a youth beyond all mortals fair,
Who seemed celestial by his mien and air,
In pleasing accents thus the silence broke,
And in these strains the recent wonder spoke:

"'Bless'd swains! I bring no terrors to affright,
Or mock your hopes with phantoms of the night.
Dispatched, I come from Heaven's Almighty King,
And to your ears the happiest tidings bring,
To all mankind, on this auspicious morn,
Th' incarnate Saviour of the world is born,
Near David's city, where in days of old
The royal shepherd did protect his fold.
Go, then, and find him wrapped in swaddling bands
Who grasps all nature with his mighty hands.
This night a stable claims his humble birth
Who stretched the skies and built the solid earth.
Thus having said, he drew the veil aside,
And glittering angels thronged on every side,
Thick as those floating motes which seem to stray,
And dance refulgent in the beams of day.
Celestial voices then our fears remove,
While thus they sing those hymns they learned above: —

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS.

I.

"'Glory to him who reigns on high,
To Heaven's imperial majesty;
To him who sits upon the throne,
The great ineffable Three-One!

II.

"'Peace from the Prince of Peace we bring,
An amnesty from heaven's high king,
Who at the Saviour's welcome birth
Scatters pardons round the earth.

III.

"'Thunders we must use no more,
In which the law was given before;
But strive rebellious man to move
With mild good-will and heavenly love.

"'While hymning thus they parted from our sight,
And soared to heaven amidst celestial light.
By their direction we forsook our fold,
To see those wonders which the angels told:
And, thus arrived, desire to feast our eyes
On him who now within the stable lies.'

"To their request consent I quickly gave,
And introduced them to the well-known cave.
With solemn rev'rence when his face they spied,

In speechless awe they gaze unsatisfied;
But while they wonder with renewed delight,
Each moment brought new miracles to sight.
Amazed, they see a radiant light unfold,
And rocks and straw assume the hue of gold;
Through the dark cave the bursting glories rise
With brighter beams than e'er adorned the skies;
While round the babe new radiations play,
Which light afresh this artificial day.
Their rustic garlands then the swains bestow,
And odorous flowers in rich profusion throw;
Some in their hands a cruse of honey bear,
Or fragrant balm's inestimable tear.
As grateful incense these were freely given,
As such accepted by the King of Heaven.
These gifts bestowed, they separate again,
And spread the tidings round the joyful plain.

"The evening star had closed the seventh day
Since Christ appeared enshrined in human clay;
And on the eighth glad morn, with joy we bear
The holy infant to the house of prayer:*
Whence, as the law directs, that sign he bore
Which marked our great progenitors before,
Inscribed in blood upon his tender skin,
Though free from actual and traductive sin;
And the next moon, as holy rites required,
We with the babe to Solyma retired,
In due obedience to Jehovah's word,
To dedicate him to his heavenly Lord.

*Luke ii. 21.

"Soon as our feet to Salem's temple came.
The fragrant incense shot a purer flame:
In lambent smiles, as if from orders given,
It seemed to glow with gratitude to Heaven.
The pious mother, on devotion bent,
Straight to the altar with her offering went;
Of harmless doves she took a lovely pair
While all her soul dissolved in grateful prayer;
These as memorials reached the bless'd abode,
And found acceptance at the throne of God.

"This double sacrifice was scarcely done,
To purge herself and dedicate her son,
Ere through the crowd prophetic Simeon came,*
Of noted virtue and unblemished fame.
On him, when cold decrepit age had spread
The hoar of winter on his feeble head,
And he one evening in the temple stayed,
And for redemption most devoutly prayed,
A lovely youth, who seemed divinely fair,
Smiled on his face, and bade him not despair;
Told him, though life was to the margin run,
And silver hairs proclaimed his setting sun,
That ere the weary wheels of life stood still,
God would the wishes of his soul fulfill,—
That Christ should come to bless the world with peace,
Before his tongue should from petition cease.
This day the same celestial form appeared;
While in his closet he his prayer preferred,
Stopped his devotion as he prostrate lay,

* Luke ii. 25.

And to the temple beckoned him away.
The good old man with joy the signal takes,
And full of transport for the temple makes;
His feet no more their former strength denied,
And useless crutches now were thrown aside;
Through all the crowd he venerably pressed,
And seized the child, and lodged him in his breast;
Then full of vigor to the altar ran,
And with this song, inspired by Heaven began:—

SIMEON'S SONG.

"'Yes, now thy servant dies, he gladly dies!
This life, dear Lord, prolong no more,—
But as thou promis'dst me before,
In peace now close my eyes,—
My eyes, which that dear object now have met,
For which so long they gazed in vain,
For whose delay so long I did complain:
I've seen the Sun of Righteousness arise;
'T is time my glimmering lamps forsake the skies,
And in the shades of death in silence set.

II.

"'The world already hails his welcome birth:
Haste then, and humble gifts prepare
To meet and bless th' Almighty Heir,
The King of heaven and earth:
Him the lost Gentiles shall their Saviour find,
Him heathen lands their Lords shall own,
Their Lord and God, him who alone
Imparts both eyes and eyesight to the blind,

III.

"'Ah, stupid nation! Wilt thou still refuse,
Still hate thy Saviour! Ah, thrice hardened Jews!
Grant Heaven these bodying fears may not be true!
Rejected by your Prince as he by you!
But ah! what cruel truths I see
In the dark womb of future days!
To what a cursed throne will ye your Saviour raise,
And crown his head with thorns and infamy!
What woes, what swords, bless'd mother, are reserved for thee!

IV.

"'But heaven at last to mercy seems inclined,
For see a glorious scene behind!
He comes, he comes, these eyes again shall see,
Again, dear Saviour, welcome thee,
The clouds thy chariot, and thy wings the wind!
In Zion shall appear
The great Deliverer:
This stubborn nation then shall strive no more,
But him who once they pierced adore,
Now Israel's glory, not her shame!'

"Thus having said, his soul to bliss retired;
Thus good old Simeon with a smile expired.

"But scenes as strange succeed to wonders past,
As each new wave rides closely on the last.
No age nor sex but must its Lord confess,
A prophet there, but here a prophetess,

Anna, renowned, a matron and a wife,*
For spotless virtue and a blameless life;
Who claimed descent from Asher's fruitful race,
Famed in her youth for every female grace,
Then sought by lovers, nor at last denied
To bless the happiest by the name of bride.
Through seven long years they no dissension knew;
Their flame was pure, and grace preserved it new;
Their hopes were mutual, and their souls the same,
In nought they differed but in sex and name.
But when he lay among the silent dead,
And his immortal part to God had fled,
A second love her heavenly thoughts denied,
And in her breast all worldly pleasure died.
She, from that hour, in hope of sacred light
Within the temple waited day and night;
Fasted and prayed, and saw through faith the day
That in her Lord should Israel's wrongs repay.
Oft her chaste soul to heaven would take its flight,
Lost and absorbed in glory infinite:
When thus retired, no look, no thought abroad,
Nothing she knew besides herself and God;
Nay, sometimes scarce distinct herself could call
Abstracted from herself — for God was all.
From Heaven she learned the day, the hour precise,
When we approached to bring our sacrifice;
Then full of joy her ecstasy expressed,
And hailed the Saviour at the virgin's breast;
Rejoiced with transport at the prize she found,
And quickly spread the circling tidings round;

*Luke ii. 36.

Conveyed the news to those whom God approved,
Who sought the Saviour, and his kingdom loved.

"These scenes had scarcely ceased to move surprise,
Before we heard that Sages great and wise*
Had lately come from some strange eastern coast,
Of which the annals, not the name, are lost.
These came, Judea's new-born Prince to see,
From the fair fields of distant Araby;[20]
Conducted safely by the powers above,
Across those plains where sandy mountains move;
Beneath the guidance of a star which shone
Full in their view with lustre not its own.
The deserts left, these Sages came at last
Where Moab's hills are with less trouble passed.
By Selah next they move, and Abarim,
Where Edom fringes Jordan's doubtful brim.[21]
Then, where the flood by ancient Gilgal falls,
They crossed the stream, and reached to Salem's walls.
On their approach they earnestly inquire
For Israel's monarch and the world's Desire;
And, Heaven-directed, found our humble shed,
And at his feet their various treasures spread.

* Matthew ii.

[20] They came from the East, as the Scripture tells us, and Arabia lay that way from the Holy Land. Nor am I much concerned whether they were kings, a sort of roitelets, like the Arabian Sheiks at present, or wise men only, though I rather incline to the latter, because of their poverty; since, had they been rich, we can not suppose their presents would have left the Virgin so poor that both Joseph and her son should still work at their trades, as we find they did.

[21] Because it overflows its banks in time of harvest. Joshua iii. 15.

"When Herod heard of prodigies so great,
He took alarm, and trembled for his fate.
His guilty soul perceived, the injured Jews
Would more than smile at this auspicious news.
Their wrongs were dreadful: but not these alone
Beneath his tyranny had heaved a groan;
With kindred blood his slipp'ry throne he dyed,[22]
And bathed his sceptre in the purple tide.
The flatt'ring tales his parasites had poured,
And which with haste his greedy soul devoured,—
Those tales which lately, to enhance his fame,
Had prostituted the Messiah's name,[23]
Now as an opiate to ambition failed,
And all the horrors of his soul revealed.
But still the tyrant, though averse to good,
Seemed with the cunning of the fox endued,
And hence the Sages to his palace brings
With pomp and grandeur not unworthy kings.
Dissembling well, his malice to conceal,
He lavished praises on their ardent zeal;
And, like a tiger crouching to destroy,

[22] He murdered his wife Mariamne, his brother Pheroras, his three sons, Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipater, the last just as he was himself expiring; and indeed if they were like their father, it were a pity that any of the breed should have been left. Vid. Jos. Antiq. lib. 6, cap. 17, and lib. 7.

[23] Eusebius, in his history, gives an account of that sect among the Jews mentioned in the Evangelists, and called Herodians, who, as he says, flattered Herod the Great with the title of the Messiah, celebrating a religious annual feast to his honor. It is perhaps worth remark, that all those who unjustly usurped that incommunicable title, either in those ages or since, as he, Barochebas, Judas, and in our times David Sabbati-Sevi, and others, came to miserable ends.

With base intentions praised the sacred boy.
'Bless'd be th' unutterable name,' he said,
Whose heavenly glories are so richly shed;
Whose mercy has to Gentile worlds revealed
That promised Prince, from ages past concealed.
O that I could the Royal Infant greet,
And cast my crown and sceptre at his feet!
O bliss supreme! could Herod's hands but bear
The world's great Sovereign to the house of prayer,
There with devotion on his mandates wait,
And serve in triumph greater than this state.'
Such were the snares the sanguine tyrant spread,
Such the delusion which his speech displayed.

"Soon as our home the Eastern Sages graced,
They saw his snares, and his intentions traced;
In all his wiles their opening eyes perceived
The impious frauds their innocence believed.
Nor was the fraud of these alone sustained,
His royal word the Sanhedrim convened;
He then inquired of those most deeply read
In what our prophets had foretold and said,
And asked with much solicitude the place
Which by our books Messiah's birth should grace.
In their debates the Sanhedrim declare,—
But you, perhaps, most learned sir, were there."
"I was," Gamaliel instantly replied,
"And heard such proofs as could not be denied.
That morning in the Sanhedrim I sate,
And marked the progress of the whole debate.
It was resolved, that Bethl'hem, David's seat,

Though mean to view, was destined to be great; —
That God's great offspring there should claim his birth,
Commence his reign, and subjugate the earth:
For thus inspired the famed Morasthite sang,
While with his lofty sounds fair Salem's mountains rang.

MICAH'S PROPHECY.

"'Let Salem boast her ancient kings,
Salem, which princely David sings;
And Shemir's vain apostate town,
Her gods, her strength, her pleasure, and renown!
Bethl'hem alone commands my choice,
It claims my lyre, and claims my voice;
In this shall Israel's land and Gentile worlds rejoice.
Though mean thou art and humble now,
Wide shall thy spreading glories grow,
And all around, like fruitful Jordan, overflow:
For if a king's or hero's seat
Must by his residence be great,
All others infinitely this o'erpowers,
Where Heaven's high king is born as well as ours.
Through future days the Royal babe I see,
How long his rule, how vast his realms shall be,
Through boundless space and time he reigns eternally.'"

"The same," said Cephas, "Joseph did repeat,
When these momentous facts he did relate.
From hence the Sages information drew,
And facts have proved these great predictions true.
Their faith grew strong when they beheld the star,

Which rose and shone to guide them where we were
Nor did their feet our humble roof disdain,
Nor did they long in Herod's courts remain,
But moved with speed the Prince of Peace to find,
For Israel's sceptre and the world's designed.
But ere they left his *formula* of state,
He gave injunctions which concealed his hate;
That, having found him, they should bring him word,
That he with homage might adore the Lord.

"But this fair semblance veiled a black intent,
Too soon discovered by the sad event;
For they no sooner entered our abode,
Than they received a messenger from God,
Whose friendly voice prohibited their stay,
And bade them travel by another way;
Nor call on Herod, who with rage pursued
The Heavenly babe, and thirsted for his blood.
Some precious gifts the Sages then prefer,
Of gold and silver, frankincense, and myrrh;
And being thus by friendly visions warned,
By different roads they to their homes returned.

"Herod no sooner found himself deceived
By men whose faith his sophistry believed,
Than horrid oaths an easy passage made,
And all the secrets of his soul betrayed;
And though the Sages were beyond his power,
The thunder ended in a bloody shower.
A mandate fierce 'gainst Bethlehem he passed,
The first on record, and we hope the last,

(My bleeding heart relates the fact with pain)
That all the infant children should be slain.
Through every street the doleful tidings fly,
And lamentations echoed through the sky.
At length from heaven a glorious angel came,
The same who freed my lovely spouse from blame:
In all his visage I beheld concern,
And mingling grief and indignation burn.
But ere I spoke, he called aloud — 'Arise,
Nor stay one moment to express surprise:
Depart this instant, and the babe convey
Where Egypt's subjects milder kings obey.
There lodge awhile, nor thence attempt to move
Till thou receiv'st commission from above.
For Herod aims with more than hellish strife
To war with Heaven, and take the infant's life.'

"He'd scarcely ended, ere the guards were come,
Equipped like butchers to supply the tomb.
The cohorts stretch before the city gate,
Where they like furies for admittance wait,
To pour upon us like a mighty flood,
And bathe their daggers in the children's blood.

"Starting, we rose, of every sound afraid,
Nor in the town one lingering moment stayed;
But, warned by Heaven to flee approaching fate,
We passed in silence through a private gate.
Our weary feet had no great distance gone
Before the streets with flaming torches shone:
From a small hill we saw the dismal glare

Moving like lightning through the troubled air.
From our retreat we heard a doleful cry
Of female voices which assailed the sky;
Shriek answered shriek, each groan another meets,
And cries of murder echoed through the streets.
Here frantic mothers for their infants prayed,
And fathers there the murd'rous foes invade.
Here mangled infants from the windows fall,
There bleeding babes are dashed against the wall,
Or with brute hands by pikes and halberts die
While lifeless heaps on bloody pavements lie.
What nameless horrors must have formed the scene,
Thus heard in part and indistinctly seen?

"These mournful woes the prophet clearly saw,
If not the tyrant who should give the blow;
And hence his language pointedly declared—
'Loud lamentations were in Rama heard;
Her murdered offspring weeping Rachel mourned,
And saw her joys to deepest anguish turned:
And hence her soul disconsolately grieved;
And, lost to hope, refused to be relieved.'
Such was the picture which the prophet drew,
Such the events which proved the record true.

"The Virgin, shrieking, felt her soul distressed,
And clasped the infant to her trembling breast;
Nor durst we more the horrid scene survey,
Or keep our station till returning day;
The infant's safety urged our speedy flight
Beneath the sable canopy of night.

We marched at once, impelled by what we feared,
And, ere the glimm'ring of the dawn appeared,
With painful steps the dreary path pursued
To the rough margin of Tekoah's wood.[23]
Beth-Hacc'rem's hill we shunned with cautious fear,
For Herod's arts had stationed soldiers there.
The forests passed, we Siddim's plains came down
On the third morn to Sheba's noted town.
Thence leaving Palestine, our course we take
Across the sands, by Sirbon's changing lake,[24]
And Cassius' mount so much renowned of late
For mighty Pompey's sepulchre and fate.[25]
Here first we entered Mizraim's fruitful soil,
Which asks no rain, watered alone by Nile.
Near old Bethshemesh[26] we the river crossed,

[23] The forest or wilderness of Tekoah lies a little south of Bethlehem, in the way to Egypt; and Beth-Haccerem is near it. We read in Jer. vi. i, of both the places together: Blow the trumpet in Tekoah (which signifies the sound of a trumpet), set up a sign of fire in Beth-Haccerem; a place I suppose much of the nature of our beacons. Now this Beth-Haccerem may either signify the house of strong men, or the house of rustics: the former interpretation I follow, supposing it a strong garrison, probably in some narrow pass of that wilderness.

[24] This lake had formerly an inlet into the sea; which being in time choked up, it now still grows less and less. It is reckoned the utmost eastern bound of Egypt.

[25] Near this was Pompey the Great basely killed, and afterward buried by a poor soldier. But the Emperor Adrian erected a beautiful monument in the same place.

[26] Now Heliopolis. Its ancient name seems to have been On, hence called Onii by Ptolemy, but by the Jews Bethshemesh, or the House of the Sun, near akin to Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun, one of the cities which, it was prophesied, should leave its idols, and speak the language of Canaan, to which place many authors think our Saviour was carried; but I go a little further, as Vida does, and fix him more in the inland country.

Which its old gods and older name has lost.
From Heliopolis we travelled on
To the proud walls of modern Babylon;[87]
But here we durst not terminate our cares
So near the frontiers of the tyrant's snares.
We still pierce deeper, and at last reside
At stately Memphis, Egypt's royal pride.
Here we beheld those piles which wound the sky,
Beneath whose top the rolling clouds pass by,
Huge useless wonders, wens on nature's face,
The younger brothers of the Babel race;
Which only serve to mark ambition's springs,
The strength of art, and vanity of kings.
Thus Memphis served, with Providence our guide,
To give that safety Palestine denied;
Where in obscurity we humbly moved,
Loving our neighbors, and by them beloved.

"But since the sun, to show departing day,
Shines from the west, and darts an oblique ray,
I soon must pause; nor need I now relate,
What all must know, ambitious Herod's fate.
His end was dreadful, but with justice given,
To mark the vengeance of insulted Heaven.
'T was then an angel by divine command,
Called us from Mizraim's to our native land: *
Thus what the prophet boldly spoke was done,

[87] This Babylon, from which many think St. Peter wrote his first epistle (though Bellarmine will have it Rome, rather than not get him there at all), has been a considerable place, though nothing like its namesake in Chaldea. It stood just at the confluence of the rivers Trajanus and Nilus.

* Matt. ii. 19.

From painting by Plockhorst.

REPOSE IN EGYPT

And 'out of Egypt God recalled his Son.'
But ere our birthplace in full view appears,
Another messenger alarmed our fears:
From him we gathered, with peculiar pain,
That Herod's son supplied his father's reign.
Instructed thus, we to the northward crossed,
And reached at length the Galilean coast;
And then in Nazareth fixed the child's abode,
The place appointed by his Father, God.
Thus was fulfilled what you have often seen,
'Christ shall be named or called a Nazarene.'[28]

"Nor will the time permit me to relate
How angels guarded his incarnate state,—
What pious wisdom all his life displayed,—
How he obedience to his mother paid,—
What pleasing prospects all our thoughts engage
From infant weakness to maturer age.
His clustering virtues all my powers defeat,
And join to form his character complete:
Yet one short anecdote I still must tell,
Ere with the day I bid my friends farewell:
Though many more I must in silence pass,
Well worth inscribing on Corinthian brass.

"Twelve years had scarcely marked our heavenly guest,
When we repaired to Salem's solemn feast.*

[28] From St. Matt. ii. ult. "He shall be called," a Hebraism for "He shall be a Nazarene." But where is this prophecy? I think both in Isaiah and Zechariah; our Saviour being promised under the name of Nazarene.

*Luke ii. 46.

He, full of joy observing our intent,
Walked by our side, and to the temple went;
But when our off'rings were completely past,
Toward our home we moved with decent haste;
When, having missed him, we expressed our fear,
Nor could intelligence of Jesus hear.
Each troop we search, of every friend inquire,
Each youth, each matron, and each hoary sire;
Inquired of all, but chief of Heli asked,
But gained no news of our celestial guest.
As some fair hind, that, wandering o'er the plain,
Escapes the hunter who her fawns had slain,
In every thicket drops the briny tear,
But sinks at last the victim of her fear;
So did the virgin through her kindred mourn,
And the next morning to the town return.
Two days in fruitless search we spent,
Two dreary nights we gave our sorrow vent;
Nor rest our feet, nor sleep our eyelids found,
To ease our souls of their corroding wound.
These efforts fruitless, we at length repair
To ask assistance in the house of prayer,
Resolved to follow the directions given,
And yield submission to the will of Heaven.
On entering here, to our surprise we found
Christ in the midst, and doctors seated round.
Each on his words with deep attention hung,
And blessed the sound of his harmonious tongue;
Admired his wisdom which his age outran,
In years a child, in speech beyond a man."

From painting by Hofmann.

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS

"Was this the child," good Nicodemus cried,
"Who asked our doctors questions, and replied?
I then was there, presided in the schools,
And heard him reason by established rules,
Gazed on his face, the wondr'ous youth admired,
And half believed him by a God inspired.
Sublime and lofty, evident and clear,
All his expressions, thoughts, and notions were;
Each look, each word, proclaimed celestial grace,
Of birth superior to the human race.
Envy and pride, his foes could scarcely prove,
He shared our wonder, and obtained our love."

"If then with zeal," the friend of Christ rejoined,
"You praise so justly his exalted mind,—
If when a child he merited applause,
Could then expatiate on the Father's laws;
What would you say—what wonder would it raise,
To hear him now in his maturer days?
How would your eloquence with lustre shine,
And all your praises how outrival mine!
His sovereign mercy and his justice shine,
His love and goodness prove his power divine;
Each look, each gesture, teems with heavenly grace,
His Father's image beams upon his face.
Yet he but injures who like me commends
The best of masters and the best of friends.
Had you like me his varied goodness proved,
Like me experienced with what warmth he loved,
Your tongues would blazon his exalted worth,
And list'ning senates spread it through the earth."

"A warmth like yours," wise Nicodemus cried.
"Seems too persuasive to be soon denied;
But to demonstrate that your views are right,
I mean to have an interview to-night,
And in his lodgings reason with your friend
On all those topics which you recommend;
To find if truth will those encomiums bear
Which so profusely grace his character."

"Nobly resolved," the pious saint replied,
"Grant me the honor to become your guide."
They join; and all the company divide.
Joseph, well pleased, saluted every guest,
And the next morning fixed to hear the rest.

Contents of the Third Book.

THE introduction, from the happiness and pleasure of pious contemplation and meditation. Nicodemus and the three disciples find our Saviour at Gethsemane. His discourse with him concerning several mysteries of the Christian faith. Nicodemus departs, well satisfied with the conference; and Gamaliel being indisposed, the meeting and further relation of the three disciples is adjourned the next day from Joseph's garden to Gamaliel's house, where the apostles proceed with their discourse of our Saviour; giving an account of the Baptist's history, his character, preaching, prophesies, and baptism; to which many come, and among the rest our Saviour, who is attested there by the descent of the Holy Ghost, like a dove, accompanied with a voice from Heaven; at which the people being about to take him by force and make him a king, he retires thence into the wilderness, as well to escape their importunity, and prepare for his approaching work, as by God's permission to be tempted of the devil. The description of that part of the wilderness whither our Saviour went. In the meanwhile, Lucifer, alarmed at the wonders of our Saviour's birth, and his appearance now at Jordan, and doubting him to be the true Messiah prophesied of to destroy his kingdom, had observed him at his baptism; but frighted thence by thunder, he retires into the abyss, arises thence at

midnight, and gives the signal to all the fiends to meet him; his speech on the occasion of their meeting. Moloch is for undertaking to destroy our Saviour; but Lucifer forbids him, and himself sets about it: he finds our Saviour, and accosts him in the shape of an old man almost famished, pressing him with his first temptation, to work a miracle, and change stones into bread. But our Saviour, knowing him through his disguise, rejects his temptation. Night approaching, he attacks him with others, raising a tempest, and several other ways endeavoring to affright him, but without success. The next morning he accosts him in a glorious form, though not denying himself, finding that he was discovered, but pretending love to mankind, especially to our Saviour, and offering him a banquet, which he had provided in the midst of a paradise raised in the wilderness. The song of the attendant spirits to invite our Saviour to eat of the feast which, on his refusal, vanishes; when the devil, enraged, changes himself into the form of a dragon, and, snatching up our Saviour, hurries him away through the air, and sets him on a pinnacle of the temple; whence he shows him, below, the priests, the Jews, and Gentiles, in their courts, gazing at him, the Roman garrison taking their pleasure in the amphitheatre, and the castle Antonia unguarded; persuading him to descend in the flame of the altar, that the Jews might acknowledge him, and under his conduct redeem their freedom; which he might more securely do, because God had promised to give his angels charge over him. Our Saviour, having answered his text with another, the devil once more

snatches him up and carries him to the top of Pisgah, representing in the air all the kingdoms of the world, with their riches and glory, and shows him the Ishmaelites travelling through the deserts with caravans of gold and spices; the kingdoms of Ethiopia, the isles of the Mediterranean, Italy, Rome, France, Britain; then Persia, over to China and India, to the East, the principal rarities whereof he describes; and still more east, cross an undiscovered strait, a new world, whither one of his attendants was then conducting a colony of Tartars; offering him his choice of all these, or, if none would satisfy him, to raise him to a throne on Pisgah, and make him king of both those worlds, if, by way of homage for them, he would bow down and adore him. At which blasphemous proposition, our Saviour instantly commands the devil to leave him, the time wherein he was permitted to tempt him being now elapsed, who accordingly vanishes away in a cloud of smoke and fire.

The Life of Christ

BOOK III

Soon as the night her sable reign began,
Repose was sought by bird, and beast, and man;
Their care concluded with declining day,
And sleep and darkness held congenial sway.
Not so the Saviour; his unwearied love
Held high communion with the powers above;
His cares for man refreshing sleep deny,
On whose behalf his soul ascends the sky.
He from the world's confused and restless noise
Retired in shade to taste celestial joys.
His thoughts, all active, walk on nature's springs.
And view the causes and effects of things;
Then mounting high on contemplation soar
To those fair regions where he reigned before,
Survey that glory which he left behind
To take our nature and redeem mankind.
Beyond this world his vig'rous mind could trace
Angelic natures through the realms of space.
His mounting soul with ardors all its own,
In prayer and praises reached Jehovah's throne,
And left behind those cares we feel below
To stab our joys, and add new stings to woe.

Go then, my soul, through time and matter fly,
Thy Saviour follow, and ascend the sky!

Survey those oceans of unbounded space,
Which lose all measures both of time and place;
Where clust'ring glories in succession shine,
Through faith and practice made in promise thine.

But ere our spirits find that safe retreat,
Afflictive storms and hurricanes must beat.
On shelves and quicksands we are daily tossed,
And many foundering are ingulfed and lost.
This dangerous voyage, claiming all our care,
Asks faith, and hope, and penitence, and prayer,
Some skilful hand the helm of life to guide
Across the stream of passion's driving tide.
Since then such dangers lurk on every coast,
On which some millions every year are lost,
Through trackless oceans we must work our way
From circling horrors to eternal day.
Thrice happy they who here beneath the storm,
Lodged in some creek, their various tasks perform:
Who watch the polar star's diminished rays,
Or greatly bless'd enjoy the solar blaze;
Who view the cross, and see their Saviour there,
And in his wounds find refuge in despair.

If from the cradle to the peaceful grave
We trace his life who died the world to save,
No dubious deeds, no problematic void
Appears to stamp his character with shade.
By day his miracles and language taught,
By night the Saviour close retirement sought.
His evening hours he spent in fervent prayer.

Till dews descended through the midnight air,
In awful solitude his moments passed,
And found a temple in each dreary waste.
Thus life's whole term, composed of light and shade,
Christ to his purposes subservient made.

Among those solitudes which he surveyed,
That was the chief in which he was betrayed:
'T was here in prayer the solemn hours he spent,
When Nicodemus to his lodgings went.*
Cephas and John, on finding him from home,
Straight to the garden with the Rabbi come:
For well they knew those shades where Christ retired
Were such exactly as their guest desired.
The hour was late when Nicodemus came
To see the Saviour, but conceal his shame;
For still ambition with her shafts assailed,
And the dread senate's future laugh prevailed.

The lunar beams were darting on his face,
When these intruders reached the solemn place,
On their approach as struck with sudden fear,
They paused awhile, not daring to draw near;
A conscious rev'rence all their souls impressed,
And quenched the pride which stung the Rabbi's
breast.
He saw strange glories on the Saviour shine,
And seemed entranced with what appeared divine.
At length, confused, the trembling Rabbi spoke,
And in these words the awful silence broke: —

* John iii. 1.

"I own, great Master, with reluctant tears
This nightly visit but betrays my fears;
Long have I felt much rev'rence for thy name,
But chose this hour to veil ambition's shame.
Our learned Sanhedrim perceive thy laws,
And half admit the justice of thy cause.
Thy mighty works have spread thy fame abroad,
And all in secret think thee sent from God.
'T is true, in public they blaspheme thy name,
And lend their eloquence to blast thy fame;
But did not prejudice or interest blind,—
Did not ambition warp the public mind,
Each doubtful bosom would its tribute bring,
And Israel's senators adore their King.
When I behold thy actions and design,
I own thy mission and its proofs divine;
For all thy miracles and deeds of love
Are emanations from the throne above.
Hence I desire from thine own lips to know
Truths most important to be learned below."

The Saviour saw the Rabbi's heart unveiled,
And thus with smiles his sacred lips unsealed:
"The works I do appeal to every sense,
And hence afford convincing evidence;
They silence reason, and the truth attest,
But can not warm or renovate the breast.
A change far deeper my commands require
In every soul that would to Heaven aspire.
The seeds of vice have reached the springs of life,
And smothered virtue in the dreadful strife;

Hence foul contagion reigns in every part,
And angry passions rule both head and heart;
For fallen nature does corrupt the whole,
The change must penetrate through all the soul.
From this sad source those fatal streams begin
Which taint the actions of mankind with sin;
And hence those torrents of corruption flow,
Which lead through time to everlasting woe.
The truths I teach to check their deadly force,
Aim to reform their intellectual source;
For every work is unvailing pain,
Which lops but branches, while the roots remain.
Thus a new birth, which renovates the soul,
And gives new life to the corrupted whole,
Becomes essential; and is freely given
To change and qualify mankind for heaven.
This second birth in all its parts I preach;
My saints enjoy the glorious truths I teach,
And, having learned the doctrines I explain,
Proclaim with me — YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."

On facts so strange the sage, in thought profound,
Mused for some moments, but no utterance found:
At length replied — "My reasoning powers are crossed,
And all my views are in confusion lost;
I feel myself unable to explain
How man, when aged, can be born again."
Our Lord rejoined — "Art thou so meanly read
In all the learning of the mighty dead?
Canst thou no further than thy senses see,
And ask from ign'rance — 'How can these things be?'

Alas! can others from your lectures learn
Truths which their teachers can not yet discern?
Thou know'st the senses are by reason weighed,
Which in her turn is by religion swayed.
When reason soars, the senses quit the field;
And both must, vanquished, to religion yield.
Can man's weak reason fathom boundless might,
Or stretch its lines to measure infinite?
Can nature's laws creation's Lord confine,
Or in one deed against his will combine?
Has he no power to find another source,
To form new laws, and counteract their force?
Has he no modes his favors to convey,
Though men know not the reason, time, or way?
Go track the wind, and tell me where it goes,
From what strange source the furious current blows?
How storms are formed beneath his guardian care,
Who in meanders whirls the fluid air?
How, though invisible to human sight,
All bodies yield to its impetuous weight?
Thou knowest well (vain man constrained must own)
Millions of facts whose causes lie unknown;
And as this fluid, on our bodies pressed,
Affords an evidence by all confessed,
Though the great cause in secret lies concealed,
While the effects are every day revealed,
So the new birth in each converted heart
Turns grief to joy, and bids its fears depart;
For know, the doctrines which I teach contain
Truths most sublime, to purge man's deadly stain;—
Truths, which thy reason must in vain explore;

They roll an ocean which commands no shore.
Hence vanquished reason must forsake the field,
And to the light of revelation yield.

"Thine eyes have witnessed the auspicious day
When God came down to visit human clay;
And, ere they close in death's embrace, shall see
His human part suspended on a tree.
Then, as the serpent, in the wilds displayed
To heal those wounds the living scorpions made,
Imparted life to those who gasped for breath,
And rescued thousands from the jaws of death,
So shall the Saviour, fastened to the wood,
Procure salvation with his reeking blood;
And all mankind, the blessing to receive,
Must catch the streams — and those who taste shall live.
Such are the efforts Heaven designs to prove
Its unexampled, unexhausted love."

On truths so strange the Rabbi seemed intent,
And half a convert from the garden went.
From what he learned, more latent facts he guessed
And grew impatient to obtain the rest;
Then to his house reluctantly retired,
Pleased with the interview his soul desired.

The sun had scarcely chased the shades of night
Ere Nicodemus hailed returning light;
And to his friend Gamaliel walks in haste,
To tell the wonders of the evening past.
He, indisposed, of Joseph did desire

That to his house the apostles might retire.
Consent obtained, the little party came
To publish facts and spread their Master's fame;
To mark the progress of prevailing light,
And place salvation in the Rabbi's sight.
Regaled with viands of becoming fare,
With neatness dressed without ambitious care,
Gamaliel then his anxious thoughts expressed:
"The facts we heard when we assembled last
Are too sublime to leave our minds in haste;
We therefore ask you fully to explain
Those various branches which must yet remain.
Your former statements so distinct and clear,
Urge this request — we therefore pause to hear."

Thus having said, renowned Gamaliel sat,
While his two friends in expectation wait;
When James arose, and with a holy sigh
Proceeded thus to give a full reply:
"If past narrations so much wonder gain,
What can be left for facts which yet remain? —
Our Master's trials abstinence, distress,
And war with Satan in the wilderness? —
His wond'rous passage through the troubled air,
By Hell assailed, though God's peculiar care? —
His aerial journey to the mountain's brow,
Which did its snares in endless prospects show? —
His station on the pinnacle alone, —
His being urged to raise his bread from stone?
The firm resistance which in all he showed,
Proclaimed his soul with heavenly power endowed.

"But first permit my willing tongue to say
How Christ, baptized, did God's command obey.
He, to fulfill the law, to Jordan came,
Where Zachary's son assumed the Baptist's name.
Here Enon's stream, not far from Bethle'm's walls,
By Salem rolls, and into Jordan falls.
Unknown to fame, the Baptist from a child
Had lived retired in Judah's fertile wild;—
Had spent his time among the rustic swains,
Whose flocks and herds enjoyed the hills and plains.
Austere he lived, remote from all resorts
Of base ambition and intrigues of courts.
Here, while to more exalted fortunes born,
Earth's sickly joys his soul had learnt to scorn;
For such mean clothing and coarse fare he used
As frugal nature bounteously produced;
Rough camel's hair his spreading shoulders bore,
Just like those spoils which ancient heroes wore;
So fared Elijah, when his food he found
Hung on the trees, or spread upon the ground:
Thus when wild honey on his table lay,
The luscious blessing made his festal day.
We learn from hence how little nature wants,
Besides those favors which her bounty grants;
And also learn how difficult to please
A pampered palate in luxurious ease:
His life severe, his language, and his dress,
The rigid virtues of his soul express.

"He, armed from Heaven, with zeal and thunder came
To warn the guilty of impending flame;

To rouse the vile along the shores he went
By Jordan's banks, and cried aloud—'Repent!
Forsake thy sins, unhappy Israel; turn,
Or writhe in flames which must forever burn.
Full in thy view the dreadful day appears,
Which marks the actions of departed years:
It comes apace; and all within the tomb
Or now alive, must meet a righteous doom.
This glorious vault above, no more the same,
Shall like an oven teem with the spreading flame,[1]
Fed and sustained by that All-powerful breath
Which gives us life—or blasts us into death;
Large flakes of fire shall roll in circles round,
And burn the stubble from the blazing ground.
Then Sadducees and Pharisees must go,
And bear their punishments in endless woe;
The bold blasphemer, and the atheist lewd,
And painted hypocrites, a vip'rous brood,
Shall find their portion in the burning tide,
And curse forever each deceitful guide.

"'Ye guilty souls, what lead you to incline
To ask for grace, or shun the wrath divine?
Where is your church, within whose pale by stealth
Ye basely crept from policy or wealth?
Does conscience wake? are guilty fears alarmed?
Does Heaven appear with all its vengeance armed?
O brood of vipers! why against the skies
Maintain your warfare, and believe in lies?

[1] This, and what follows, are the substances of Malachi, iv. "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven."

Fly, wretches, fly from your impending fate,
And ask forgiveness ere it be too late.
This sacred moment grace unfolds her gates,
And sovereign mercy your acceptance waits;
Repentance through the Saviour now display
The path which leads to everlasting day.
Hereby your souls may find that healing grace
Which shines revealed to save the human race.
Go, see the Sun of Righteousness arise,
And on its glories feast your longing eyes;
It shines to heal each mortal wound within,
And cure the poison of the serpent — sin.
He, raised on high, compassionately brings
Life and salvation in his healing wings;
Who look may live, though now they gasp for breath,
And find deliv'rance from the pangs of death;
These the true Canaan promised shall possess,
While others perish in the wilderness;
These through the world shall in full triumph go,
And through their Lord subdue each hell-born foe·
Lands yet unknown his laws shall entertain,
And o'er the nations the Messiah reign!'

"These thundering calls the Jews, alarmed, received,
And numbers, listening, trembled and believed.
You know what crowds from various regions came,
And bare me witness to the Baptist's fame —
Some who in wild Perea wandered wide,[2]

[2] Of this Perea, Fuller thus speaks, lib. 1, p. 37: "Perea is a country containing all the land once belonging to Reuben, Gad, an Manasseh, on the east of Jordan."

Near Jabbok's ford, or Arnon's streamy side;
Penuel and Succoth many sons supply,
Whose haughty fathers were compelled to fly;
Their hosts with Midian's from great Gideon fled
On those fair fields where Jacob's cattle fed;—
From Jabesh some, where Saul such succors brought,
And some from Gilboa where that monarch fought:
He warred with Heaven, and in the dreadful strife
Lost in one day his sons, his crown, and life.
Those various tribes with haste to Jordan go,
Whose fruitful fields his waters overflow.
Some from Bethsaida far more distant came,
By Heaven directed, and the prophet's fame:
From strong Tiberias some, and some came down
From Tabor's mount, and famed Bethulia's town:
These from old Shalem, Thebes, and Bezek go;
From Pisgah these, and these from Jericho;
But thousands more from royal Salem come,
And half depopulate their native home.
You know how much our elders did esteem
The Baptist — know the message sent to him;
You know the honors all our senate paid,
And why they veiled their sentiments in shade."

"Too well," Gamaliel with a sigh replied,
"I know that story and the senate's pride.
These eyes have witness to the Baptist borne,
And seen the evidence repelled with scorn.
Too well I know and dread the sad event;
For he who speaks was by the senate sent
To seize those truths which issued from his tongue,

And try by sophistry to prove them wrong.
My latest hour must mourn that fatal deed,
When we rejected him — But, Sir, proceed."

"The Baptist now," said James, "had thousands seen
Cleansed from the guilt and from the power of sin.
At length the Saviour to the Herald went;
But mark the strange, the wonderful event:
So soon as John his great Redeemer saw,
He paused in silence with religious awe;
With prostrate rev'rence at his feet he fell,
And boldly hailed him King of Israel;
And, while astonished the spectators seem,
Trembling he asks to be baptized of him.
The Saviour, smiling, begged him to desist,
And in an instant all his fears dismissed;
Explained those mandates which he must fulfill,
To do and suffer his great Father's will.
The wondering sage reluctantly obeyed
This strange commission which his Lord displayed;
For well he knew that no unholy deed
Could or repentance or ablution need.

"No sooner Christ, who came mankind to save,
Had consecrated Jordan's limpid wave,—
Than in a moment all the clouds remove,
And give a passage to a mystic Dove.
Its brightness seemed too glorious to behold,
Its breast was silver and its wings were gold;
On every part celestial colors shine,
And all who saw it thought the form divine.
It moved majestic through the yielding air,

While Jesus knelt in ecstasy and prayer;
Its feet at length his sacred temples pressed,
When lo, the clouds with lambent lightnings broke,
A voice was heard — and thus Jehovah spoke:
'Behold my Son, by miracles approved,
My sacred Image, and my best Belov'd,
Whom sov'reign mercy to the world has given
To die for sin and bring mankind to heaven.'

"The voice was known of heaven's eternal Lord,
And all who heard it trembled and adored.
The wondering crowd with eager kindness ran
To greet Jehovah in the form of man;
Their hands and hearts officious honors bring,
And every voice conspired to hail him king.
But he was not for earthly kingdoms born,
The crown he wore was made of rugged thorn.
His soul had learnt to scoff earth's glittering toys,
And nobly aim at more substantial joys.
Hence, when assailed, he to the desert flies,
And trusts in Him who rules both earth and skies,
To shun that fame which others court in vain,
And which too many damn themselves to gain.
'T was here, in dreary solitude retired,
He met that combat which his foe desired.

"A dreadful wild there is which stretches wide[2]
Its lonely skirts by fruitful Edom's side;
It stands impervious to the solar light,—
The home of horror and perpetual night,

[2] See Jer. ii. 6. Deut. viii. 15 and xxxii. 10.

Not once illum'd by one intruding star
To guide or cheer the wand'ring traveller.
Along these wastes unceasing tempests howl,
And underneath tremendous currents roll.
No flow'rs on the unwholesome surface grew,
Nor shrub nor tree, except the poisonous yew,
And weeping cypress for sad hearses made,
And gloomy ebon casting deadly shade.
On these at times the furious lightnings broke,
And on their trunks the scars of thunder spoke.
If through this gloom a vacant spot was found,
Unwieldy serpents trailed upon the ground;
While birds obscene, foul harpies, vultures fell,
With all the monstrous visages of hell,
Predicted mischief by their voice and face,
And added vocal horrors to the place.

"Such was the field, and such the dismal stage,
Where our great Captain did with hell engage.
Rapt in the Spirit Jesus thither flies,
Ardent to combat for the glorious prize.
Nor did he wait this hour his strength to know;
His power already had subdued the foe.
He, stung with envy, insolence, and pride,
In distant worlds his vanquished forces tried;
But when ambition found its efforts vain,
Transfixed he fell with all his blasted train
To those abodes of horror and despair,
Which, doomed by Heaven, they must forever bear.
Sometimes indeed, as mortals may perceive,
They sally forth as God may grant them leave;

When they, on wickedness intent, disperse
Mischief and murders through the universe.

"Successful here, the fiend commenced his reign
By introducing anarchy and pain;
On earth's long shores disseminating woe,
To add new converts to the realms below.
Full well he knew, when man in Eden fell,
And justly earned the miseries of hell,
A won'drous voice was heard from Heaven, which said
'The woman's Seed shall bruise the serpent's head.'
This fact his mind revolved with conscious fear,
And oft he dreaded that his fall was near.
Himself alert, alert his watchful spies,
Had much discovered with their prying eyes.
From spies at court who in close ambush lay,—
From spies that glittered in the beams of day,
Who in lone woods like lustful satyrs rove,
Or earthly fiends that blood and murder love,—
Much information had increased his store,
But still he feared, and still he sought for more.
Each dubious fact his active mind observed,
Was marked with caution, and with care preserved.

"But nothing yet had so alarmed his fear
As Christ, whose deeds he watched with anxious care.
He heard and trembled when the Saviour prayed,
And, lost in darkness, felt himself afraid:
He saw his life with prodigies begin,
And marked his footsteps, but perceived no sin;
By him beheld his various wiles subdued,

And Mary's Son with much suspicion viewed.
But when he saw, at Jordan's swelling streams,
The open heavens diffuse their living beams,—
Beheld the clouds in swift disorder move,
And on his head descend the sacred Dove;—
Heard John in strains of eloquence explain
The swift approach of the Messiah's reign;
His strong suspicions to assurance turned,
And all the Devil in his bosom burned.
With envy filled, he mingled unespied
Among those crowds who wept on Jordan's side;
Then on pinions mounted to survey,
And through the ether cut his pathless way
To God's high temple and the sacred town;[3]
But ere he launched, once more on looking down,
His mighty and much dreaded foe appears:
And while he gazed, he almost dropped through fears.
But when he heard that voice which silence broke
(And many say it thundered, while he spoke),
He felt himself with such strange terrors driven,
As seized his host when Michael fought in heaven;
From these abodes he takes his sudden flight,
And seeks for refuge in primeval night:
So rushing through the clouds the vulture flies,
When at a distance he the quarry spies;
So darts the eagle on the velvet lawn,
So from his talons springs the tender fawn!

"Confused and trembling, there obscure he lay,
Nor once emerged till night resumed her sway:

[3] Jerusalem is called the "holy city." Matt. iv. 5.

He then arose from the deep gloom he made,
To hide his shame in her unconscious shade;
His livid form with smothered sulphur crowned,
His glaring eyeballs blasted all the ground;
His furious soul rekindled all its hate,
And poured strange curses on the hand of fate.
Incensed to madness, he the signal gave,
And called his demons from each lonely grave;
An instant council he designed to form,
To fight in ambush, or assault by storm.
From earth to hell the demons haste away,
Ambitious Belial, lustful Asmoday,
And haughty Moloch, taller than the rest;
Their looks and forms their various ranks expressed.
Each wretch they leave, whom they in triumph led
Through the pale mansions of the silent dead;
All seemed more dreadful than when first they fell,
And gave new horrors to the glooms of hell.
But most the looks of hell's dread prince surprise,
Nor durst the conclave meet his burning eyes;
None could accost the dreadful tyrant;—none
But crouched, and sighed, and trembled round his throne.
At length the fiend, that foe of God and man,
Unsealed his lips and thus enraged began:—

"'Dishonored angels! whither are we led,
What cursèd power has struck our virtue dead?
Are we so tame, so worthy more than hell,
We dare no more against our foes rebel?
Are all your counsels to submit and yield,
And to a vagrant leave unfought the field?

On earth's wide coast must Satan's empire fall,
And Mary's Son possess the spacious ball?
Oh, foul disgrace! forbid it fate, that we
So long in vain have tasted liberty!
He can but thunder and full well we know,
By past experience, what his bolts can do.
Shall earth-born man so oft his vengeance dare,
While made the object of peculiar care;
And we relent, who have been basely driven
With peals of thunder from the verge of heaven?
Will you forget the cause in which you fell,
And praise the despot in the flames of hell?
Must I forsake and abdicate my throne,
And for a monarch this young Saviour own?
Like you resolve to join the earth-born race,
Shed tears, and pray, and supplicate for grace?
Why else is nothing either done or said,
Worthy yourselves, your empire, or your head?
Go then, ye cowards, and ignobly fawn,
And, bound in shackles, lick the despot's throne!'

"Infernal Moloch could no longer bear,
But rose convulsed with fury and despair.
Such were his looks, and such his furious eyes,
When Heaven in anger hurled him from the skies!
'A charge so daring,' he exclaimed, ''t is well
That he who utters reigns enthroned in hell;
From any else, one half of this should cost
More than in heaven the most exalted lost.
For our exertions are these legions prized
No more, than basely to be stigmatized

With feeble penitence? Can that be borne
In hell, which ev'n the earthly tyrants scorn?
But words are vain: We all of us are true,
Sworn foes to heaven and earth, and friends to you.
Such deeds await us as shall spread our fame,
And hell shall blazon Moloch's glorious name.
On Jordan's margins, which we lately roved
To aid that cause which we so long have loved,
I then a haughty Pharisee possessed,
And lodged a darling viper in his breast;
And while our leader watched the doubtful day,
Belial unseen within another lay.
We heard the thunder, and the oral sound,
And saw great Satan mounting from the ground.
But still we stayed Christ's secret haunts to know,
And watch the movements of our deadly foe;
We saw his footsteps to the desert bend,
And marked the angels who on him attend.
To his retreats all anxious to pursue,
We stand prepared, and wait commands from you.
I to destroy him will the forests fire,
In which, if man, he must in flames expire;
But if these flames should unsuccessful prove,
The solid earth shall from its axis move;
The mighty mass shall to the centre rive,
And in the gulf entomb him yet alive;
Or rising whirlwinds rocks and hills displace,
And dash all Pisgah on his mangled face.'

"He said, and paused, nor would for orders stay,
Till Satan rose to interrupt his way.

'To me alone,' the gloomy tyrant cries,
Belongs the glory of the enterprise;
I go at once to finish the design;
Mine be the honor, as the danger mine:
Soon heaven in mourning hell shall see with joy,
And take the life of this ill-fated boy.'

"Thus having said, the sooty conclave rose,
And to the wild, disguised, their leader goes;
Who, on arriving at the forest, found
The Saviour prostrate on the dewy ground;
He, rapt in thought, his spotless prayer preferred
Against the onset which the tempter dared;
In which we see a bright example given,
That man, when tempted, might apply to Heaven:
Thus to instruct us, and mark out our road,
He asked as man what he might take as God.

"Soon did the tempter find his effort fail;
O'er those who pray, he never can prevail!
Yet still he tempted, and his darts preferred,
And vainly hoped to find him off his guard;
Each secret art and strategem he tries,
False hopes, and joys, and vanities to raise;
Objects within, and those before his face,—
The solitude and horrors of the place:—
The gloomy darkness, and the gathering storm,—
And lightnings' glare which heaven's fair face deform:
But all his arts the tempter only mock,
Or fall like hail against the solid rock;
Each rude assault unmoved the Saviour bore,

And kept his mind where it was fixed before.
Satan at first, of heavenly arms afraid,
Observed much caution while the Saviour prayed;
But when he saw that forty days had passed,
In which his lips no food had deigned to taste,—
When he through lassitude to faint began,
And thus, though God, confess himself a man,
His deadly foe with exultation cried,
'The prize is mine!'—and heaven and earth defied.
'This Son of God shall feel the same disgrace
That Adam felt—the founder of their race.'

"But soon his deep insidious guile repressed
Those bold designs which first engrosssd his breast;
He then resolved incognito to try
What secret strength, or wit, or policy,
Against his enemy would best prevail,
Who now with hunger had begun to fail.
To know by proof what these attacks could do,
Some tattered garments round himself he threw;
Lean sallow cheeks entrenched with care and age,
And eyes grown dim which blasting death presage,
White hairs, pale lips, long beard, and wrinkled face,
And palsied head, his foul deceptions grace.
A rustic staff his shriveled hands support,
His trembling feet to crutches had resort;
With tottering steps he came, and bowed his head,
And thus, dissembling, to the Saviour said:—

"'Hail, Son of God, by signs from Heaven approved,
Foretold by prophets, and by God beloved!

Full sixty years, through God's amazing grace,
These trembling feet have trod this hideous place,
Far from the hardened, unbelieving Jews,
Who to admit the prophecies refuse.
Long have I been by revelation warned,
That ere these muscles to the dust returned,
These eyes, though dim, should God's Messiah see,
Who, like old Simeon, I behold in thee.

"'When the great Baptist from the desert came
To Jordan's banks to testify thy fame,
I from my cell to hear his voice repaired,
And with attention all his doctrines heard;
But fondly thought, ere I forsook my home.
That mighty prophet — the Messiah — come.
But soon my heightened expectations fell,
When I perceived he worked no miracle;
For this of old the prophet did reveal
To be Messiah's evidence and seal.
These signs to thee on Jordan's banks were given
In oral language, and the Dove from heaven.
These various prodigies amidst the crowd
Having beheld, I should have cried aloud,
Had not some power, unseen to mortal eyes,
Brought to this waste the Favorite of the skies.
Returning thence with anxious hope to see
Him whom I loved, I quickly followed thee.
At length my track by dubious paths was crossed,
And I, half starved, was in the desert lost.

"'The silver moon has formed her little year,
And half another, since I wandered here;

Full forty days are now completely past
Since I presumed of common food to taste;
On acorns, leaves, and humble roots I fed,
Nor dared to ask the luxury of bread.
With trembling steps I feebly wandered round
Each hill and vale, but this unhappy ground:
For this I thought no footsteps dared before;
Within these caves I heard the lions roar.
Hence I inferred, if thou hadst entered here,
To find thee living I must needs despair;
Nor could I hope to flee those darts of fate,
Which, armed with death, here every traveller wait.
Yet in I crept through this portentous shade,
Nor aught expected but to find thee dead;
I then resolved thy hapless fate to mourn,
And with warm tears bedew thy rocky urn,
Thy dear remains within some grave to lay,
And all due honors to thy ashes pay.
But since with joy I find my bodings vain,
Though where no aliment can life sustain:—
Since here no fruits or wholesome herbs are found
Above the surface of this blasted ground;
If thou indeed the great Messiah be,
Disclose thy power and save thyself and me;
For else, our frames and haggard looks confess
We soon must perish in this wilderness.
Now let the Godhead in full view appear,
Nor meanly stay to pine unpitied here.
Through faith I know, if thou the word should'st say,
"*Be turned to bread*,"— these stones would soon obey,*

* Matt. iv. 3.

Thy powerful mandate would these flints transform,
And to these horrors give another form.
But though our fathers were with manna fed,
I, faint with hunger, ask no more than bread;
Haste then, my Lord, these craving wants supply,
Or at thy feet I gasp for life — and die.'

"The Saviour listened; but with piercing eyes
Saw the foul tempter through the saint's disguise.
'Full well,' said he, 'I know thy black intent,
And what thy looks and false pretences meant;
Through all thy turns the serpent's wiles I spy,
And, free from dread, to thy assaults reply —

"'God's holy word forbids all anxious care
For earthly food — and thus 't is written there,—
Man shall not only be sustained by bread,
But by God's promises, as Moses said.
But though these trees appear as only made
To shield wild beasts and serpents which they shade,
Their horrors were for wisest ends designed,
Unknown to thee — impervious to mankind.
If hunger drives, in neighboring forests grow
Unnumbered fruits, and thither thou mayst go:
Nor will great nature's universal Lord
Give signs from heaven or miracles afford,
When he has deigned these energies to give,
And still preserves those powers by which we live.
Yet the first Cause, who all these causes made,
Could these effects produce without their aid;
But be it known, his wisdom has denied

To grant thy wish or gratify thy pride;
Yet those he succors who on him depend,
And does the graces of the faithful blend,
And life confer which shall sustain no end.'

"The fiend, abashed, to give his curses vent,
Straight from the Saviour in confusion went.
Against his frauds he found each passage barred,
And for assaults by open force prepared.
Meanwhile the Son of God no shelter found;
But, cold and hungry, pressed the barren ground.
The skies his canopy, the earth his bed,
And rocks of flint sustained his weary head;
The falling dews his only covering form
Amidst the horrors of the gathering storm.
In this abode he sought a short repose,
To ease his soul of agonizing woes;
But his short sleep was mixed with dismal dreams
Of falling rocks, wild yells, and pitchy streams;
For at his head unseen the tempter lay,
Striving through sleep to lead his soul astray.
But though with sinless fears the man's distrest
The God that dwells within repels the rest.
Through these indeed his short-lived slumbers fled,
And left the terrors of the scene displayed.

'Roused from the earth, he heard the storm on high,
And infant thunders murmuring round the sky;
These to the forest all their forces led,
And in dread volleys bellowed o'er his head;
From the dark clouds a dreadful torrent poured,

And blasting lightning every leaf devoured;
Like Egypt's plagues, the floods and flames conspire
To drown with water and consume with fire;
In dread tornadoes all the furious winds
From their dark caves the enemy unbinds;
These set at large with madness rushed abroad,
And seas and mountains formed their destined road;
From the four hinges of the world they came,[4]
And in their fury drove the lightning's flame;
On whirling rocks their earliest rage they spent,
And rifted yews beneath their pressure bent:
The earth below, which held their roots, gave way,
And on the ground vast trunks dismembered lay;
The distant pines and more contiguous oaks
Suffered and groaned beneath the weighty strokes.
These had preceding hurricanes sustained,
And half coeval with the world remained.[5]
But these in vain their long prescriptions plead
Their boasted honors lie among the dead:
Now rocked by earthquakes, twirled and twisted round,
They feel convulsions heave them from the ground;
While fiercer blasts their pondrous masses rear,
And into shivers dart them through the air.
Now hills of sand come rolling with the wind,[6]
And rocky fragments tumble fast behind.

[4] This is Milton's thought, and a very beautiful variation for the four cardinal points.

[5] So it is said of the Hercynian oaks.

[6] It is usual in those countries for vast storms, or rather hurricanes of sand, to arise, and, being driven with the wind, overthrow and stifle passengers, whole caravans, and sometimes bury whole armies; as it is reported of that of Cambyses in the Libyan deserts. See Thevenot in his description of Egypt.

Here caverns yawn, by bellowing earthquakes made,
There fierce volcanoes what was left invade.
From sudden craters glowing stones aspire,
And earth seemed drenched with waves of liquid fire.
Thus mingled elements a chaos pour,
And in his face drive on the dreadful shower;
Nor from these woes could Christ a refuge find,
Repelled by storms, and urged by flames behind.

"From these rude blasts ill wert thou shrouded then,
O Son of God!—Great friend of sinful men!
Houseless, alone, while every bird or beast
Sought its warm den, or pressed its downy nest.
Yet thou unshaken didst these storms sustain,
And hell's artillery only roared in vain!

"But still the fiend, his efforts to repeat,
Gathered fresh malice from each new defeat.
The flames and storms forsook the troubled air,
And horrid darkness introduced despair.
No sounds were heard, no objects now appeared;
But gloomy silence her black standard reared.
These reigned awhile, but soon a dismal noise
Pierced the dire gloom with lamentable cries.
Midst dismal rocks the awful shrieks began,
Which seemed from man assailed by savage man.
The shrieks grew shriller as they pierced the shade,
And female voices seemed to ask for aid.
Murders and rapes resounded in the cry,
And clashing swords struck lightning to the eye:
By this our Lord saw numbers gasp for breath,

And struggle in the agonies of death:—
Then from the clouds some coruscations came,
And for some moments all appeared in flame;
By this the Saviour instantly discerned
Fierce bloody ruffians who compassion spurned;
They seemed as hunting more for blood than prey,
And chose this place to shun the light of day.
Some cased in steel their javelins poise — the rest
Their arrows drew and leveled at his breast.
The bowstring twanged to urge the flying dart,
But none could reach or terrify his heart.

"The tempter, foiled in what his rage designed,
Flew to new terrors which remained behind.
Each beast appeared which once to Eden came
And bowed to Adam to receive its name.
These Satan brought intending to affright
Christ in the mazes of the dreadful night.
Here from the slimy margins of the Nile
Came with slow steps the dreadful crocodile,
Such as the naturalist would deem a prize,
And with him serpents full as large in size.
The false hyena's face was here discerned,
And in his looks unnatural fierceness burned.
Here growling wolves and frightful panthers came,
With hideous forms I have not words to name.
Across the rocks the nimble tiger flew,
With howling lions terrible to view.
Here some were found among the brutal race
Which nature bears not on her spacious face.
For hideous forms my tongue forbears to tell,

Were here put on by imps which came from hell.
Sometimes these beasts, by nature fierce and wild,
Gazed on our Lord and looked serenely mild.
Yet through their hearts the fiends diffuse new power
To seize their foe, and urge them to devour.

"These brutal forms the grand arch traitor led,
And like a leopard darted at his head.
But when enraged he found the powers of hell
Too weak to storm this holy citadel,
He howled in all the anguish of despair,
And. clothed in flames, vanished in liquid air.

"But since nor storms, nor shrieks. nor beasts, nor night,
Nor those dread forms which guilty man affright,
Could move the Saviour, — spectres now invade,
And pale and ghastly flit along the shade.
With flaming torches here and flambeaus high,
A corpse moves slowly at a distance by.
The shrieking ghosts, which crowd around the bier,
Full in his face with fiery eyeballs stare,
With looks deranged and hair distained with blood,
In which, alive, their hands had been embrued;
These as they pass groan out a piercing sigh,
Weep tears of blood and fade before the eye;
Or urged by fiends whom dismal forms infest,
New barb their darts and point them at his breast.
But though their numbers, rage, and yells increase,
He sits unmoved in calm and sinless peace.[7]

[7] A verse of Milton's.

"The night at length began to wear away,
The ghosts retired before approaching day.
The beams of light arrayed the golden east,
And sullen darkness travelled to the west;
When, ere the sun unveiled his cheerful face,
Christ bade farewell to this unholy place.
He, cold and hungry, to a hillock goes,
To catch those beams which free from clouds arose;—
To turn his thought on the preceding storm,—
His robes to dry, and frozen limbs to warm.
'T was here the tempter his design renewed,
And the same end by different means pursued.
Arrayed in garments of becoming light,
Unlike the horrors of the recent night,
He bade him welcome on the bended knee,
With all the arts of false humility,
From those strange conflicts he had lately passed,
When in the darkness they encountered last.
But having found each past disguise well known,
He thought it best his character to own;
Yet lodge his malice in pretenses fair,
And, with intrigue, what force had lost, repair.
Hence, with compassions which his soul abhorred,
And daring pity, he addressed our Lord:—

"'Though men have been instructed to upbraid
And call us foes—we sometimes give them aid.
Important truths our oracles decide,
And millions bow to this unerring guide;
We to the rich present the golden ore,
And spread our tables for the weak and poor;

We kill those scruples which would murder mirth,
And for the palate give inventions birth.
Yet for these deeds we stand condemned to bear
The crimes of men, in which we scarcely share.
If then for these, ungrateful as they are,
We watch all anxious and such gifts prepare,
How much on thee must every heart bestow
To meet thy wants and cancel what we owe!
Nor can we fear thou wilt unthankful prove.
And with ingratitude requite our love.
Full well I know thee, though the Son of God,
Both cold and hungry in this wild abode;
And though thy wisdom or thy power denied
The poor old hermit who for bread applied,
My gifts, unasked, thine eyes shall quickly see,
In rich profusion kept in store for thee.'

"Thus having said, there instantly arose
Scenes, such as would an Eden recompose;
The sturdy oak, the all-enlivening pine,
The stately cedar formed for work divine;
The shady chestnut, and the walnut fair,
And fragrant lotus, spread their branches there;—
The virtuous palm, which does by pressure rise,
And lift its head towards the bending skies;
The lovely cherry reddening with a blush,
The golden quince which hung from every bush;
The silken peach with noble flavor blessed,
The plum whose name Armenian fields confessed;
The juicy mulberry, which, fables feign,
From blood of lovers drew its purple stain:—

On every side the mantling vineyard spread,
And pendant grapes hung clustering round his head.
Unnumbered flowers to entertain the guest
Rose from the ground to decorate the feast.
These humbly creep to deck the arbor's side,
Those mount on high and glow with native pride;
And with such art were all with fruit combined,
That the same hand might flowers and clusters find.

"Not far from these, all open to the view,
In spicy groves the golden orange grew;
The silver lemon next, and next to these
The rich pomegranate from beyond the seas;
This was at first from punic Carthage brought,
But bore a part in what the tempter wrought.
Beneath their feet a carpet chiefly green
Showed nature's nice embroidery between;
While every hue so exquisitely grew,
As if the landscape art and nature drew.
Around the arbor in large tufts arose
The valley's lily and sweet Sharon's rose,
The jasmine, camphire, nard, each fragrant sweet,
Which in the spouse's garden are presumed to meet.
While mossy benches, which might monarchs please,
Spread their soft laps as if to promise ease

"Full in the midst a costly table stood,
Laden with fruit and every kind of food.
The middle part a forest boar sustained,
And costly dishes covered what remained,
Such as the taste, and smell, and eyes invite,

With various show and order exquisite.
From air and ocean much provisions came,—
From earth those dainties most renowned in name.
The waters furnished every fish that dwells
In seas or river, armed with scales or shells.
To crown the rest, and gratify the taste,
Rich sparkling wines a spacious sideboard graced,
In crystal vases dangerous to behold,
Or massy goblets formed of Ophir's gold.
Attendant youths and lovely virgins wait
To serve the Saviour in the pomp of state;
Their ambient hair in careless ringlets flowed,
And in their faces youthful vigor glowed.
Some hold a charger where pomegranates shine,
And some sustain a flask of generous wine.
All, decked with smiles, their offices enjoyed,
And seemed to wish they could be more employed.
Seated apart, in flowing robes arrayed,
Two lovely nymphs their charms with art displayed;
Their snares the snares of mortals far excel—
Lovely as ever tempted man to hell!
Delicious poison darted from their eyes,
But he who drinks inevitably dies.
Enchanting sorc'ries dwelt upon each tongue,
While thus to warbling lutes harmoniously they sung:

THE SONG

"Say, what songs shall we prepare
For both worlds' immortal Heir?
How our joy, our love express,
In this barren wilderness?

"Honey from thy feet did flow,
O'er thy head fair arbors grow,
At thy sight fierce beasts grew mild,
And the barren desert smiled.

"Welcome, welcome, welcome thrice
To this happy paradise.
Here no serpent needst thou fear,
No forbidden fruit is here.

"Hark! the amorous turtles call!
Hark! the silver waters fall!
And a gentle, spicy breeze
Whispers through the rustling trees.

"These, the rugged tempests o'er,
Storms and whirlwinds heard no more,
These the Hero all invite
To soft love and gay delight.

"Safe and friendly all appears;
We thy gentle ministers!
We this food before thee placed,
Condescend to sit and taste!

"Thus sung the syrens, but they sung in vain,
Nor gained one purpose to reward their pain.
Their keenly barbed and well-directed dart
Assailed his ears, but could not reach his heart.
No dangerous softness crept unguarded in
To lodge the embryo of a growing sin;
Nor though the tempter his design pursues,

And his entreaties earnestly renews,
Could he prevail upon our suffering Lord
To taste or languish for the food prepared.

"'Alike,' said Christ, 'I scorn thy gifts and thee,
Thy hateful malice and thy flattery.
Were those the friendships of thy recent boast,
Shown the last night when angry tempests tossed?
Thy acts of kindness to this world below
Conduct thy children to eternal woe.
Thy boasted oracles, in fair disguise,
Are only demons speaking doubtful lies.
That food before me which thy vassals eat
Is but a vision and a specious cheat,—
But fancied viands of delusive air,
And those who taste will find them bitter fare.
Nor can thy power with all its pomp and state
A single atom of the dust create.
Vain are those phantoms which deceive the sight,
As were the recent horrors of the night.
My soul unmoved, from thy enchantments free,
Scorns to submit or take an alms from thee.
I know thy snares, thy bold intrigues espy,
And all thy powers and stratagems defy.'

"At these reproofs the tempter's visage turned,
And all his breast with indignation burned.
'If all,' he said, 'the favors I present
Must be perverted from the ends I meant;—
If mean suspicions haunt thy jealous breast,
And evil thoughts forbid thy soul to rest;

Too mean I deem thee to approach my board,
And undeserving what these scenes afford.
These costly viands others shall devour,
And with contempt defy thy feeble power,
While thou with hunger shalt unpitied pine;
For know the banquet and the guests are mine.
Go then, with tears perpetuate thy fast,
And try how long thy abstinence will last.
Meanwhile I hold thee, till thy follies cease,
A foe to nature and a foe to peace.
Here, then, I pause, from all engagements free,
And stand avowed thy open enemy.'

"No more was said; the table disappeared,
And harpies' talons and their wings were heard.
The traitor soon in horrid forms appeared,
In all that mortals ever saw or feared.
No more he stood arrayed in peaceful light,
But frowned indignant menacing to fright.
His face displayed a hideous beak and nose;
His cankered breast blue poisonous scales inclose.
A dragon's train behind the monster grew,
His bat-like wings were spread, with which he flew.
Where hands had been, unnatural pounces lay,
Such as become a bird or beast of prey.
With these the Son of God he seized, and bore
On heights sublime from this enchanted shore.
As some strong vulture which had fiercely struck
A harmless dove near Chereth's silver brook,—
O'er woods and fields in triumph borne its prey,
And through the air pursued its pathless way;

So did the prince of the infernal host
Convey his prize from Paran's desert coast.
O'er Bozrah's rock and Edom's fruitful hill
The dragon flies, by God's permissive will.
From hence to Moserah and Hor they come,
The last renowned for holy Aaron's tomb.
Near Sodom's lake they journey now in haste,
And between Halak and Acrabbim passed.[8]
From Zin and Kadesh to the right they rove,
And into Debir's airy regions move;
In ancient days 'twas Kirjath-Sephir named,
For valiant Othniel's dear-bought conquest famed;[9]
Empire and love the victor's views divide,
He humbled first the Canaanitish pride,
Then won the charming Achsah for his bride.

"Soon as the people this strange flight discerned,
Their wondering thoughts to consternation turned.
A learn'd astronomer the monster showed,
Where o'er the town he marked his airy road.
Men, matrons, maids, and children, run to see
What all esteemed an unknown prodigy.

[8] There is a place just at the southwest corner of the Dead Sea, called Maaleh-Acrabbim (see Josh. xv. 3), in English, "the crawling up of serpents;" probably from many of them coming up to that forlorn place from the adjoining wilderness, near which the Jews were plagued with fiery serpents. Opposite to this stands Mount Halak, vid. Josh. xi. 17, between which two places, I suppose, Satan took his airy journey.

[9] This Debir, which signifies an oratory, called also Kirjath-Sepher, or the city of a book, is thought to have been a Canaanitish university. It is situated in the tribe of Judah, south of Hebron, not far from the plain of Mamre. For the history of its conquest by Othniel, see Judges i. 12, 13.

But in some moments the strange sight was gone,
And Satan flew by Ziph and Jeshimon.
On leaving Hebron to the left, they stray
And soon discerned where ancient Gaza lay;
Where Ashdod, Askelon, and Ekron stood,
And Gerar fair and Bezor's little flood;
Through all Philistia was the fiend obeyed,
And on his altars rites abhorred were paid.[10]
O'er Libnah's walls from hence the dragon sailed,
Leaving strong Lachish where Sennacherib failed;[11]
Then by Tekoah's forests bent his course,
And flew o'er Bethlehem with impetuous force;
Thence passing Saveh with an easy flight,[12]
Imperial Salem first appeared in sight.
Here he surveyed its utmost southern bound,
By sacred Zion's beauteous turrets crowned,
Where Millo rises by Siloam's wave,[13]

---

[10] See 2 Kings i. 2, etc., where we read of the oracle of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron; the same, undoubtedly, with Beelzebub in the New Testament.

[11] This city was besieged by Sennacherib; but we do not read that he took it; nay, it is said that he departed from it, 2 Kings xix. 8, and it was one of the last which held out against Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxxiv. 7.

[12] This valley of Saveh, or Shaveh, is a little south of Jerusalem. It is mentioned twice, and, I think, no more, in the Holy Scriptures; once by its proper name, Gen. xiv. 17, as the place where the king of Sodom met Abraham, and Melchisedeck came forth and gave him bread and wine; and a second time, only by a periphrasis called the King's Dale, 2 Sam. xviii. 18, as it is also in the former place.

[13] Millo, which signifies a filling, because built in the void space between Sion and Jerusalem, was begun by King David, 2 Sam. v. 9, and finished under Solomon, Jeroboam being overseer of the work, 1 Kings xi. 27, etc.

Whose solid walls its peaceful waters lave:
These thence descending into Kidron pour,
Where David's son erected Ophel's tower.[14]
To curse the town the rebel scarcely stayed,
Ere he the Saviour of the world conveyed
To Israel's temple; set apart to share
Their faith, repentance, sacrifice, and prayer.
Thence looking down, on Herod's tower he fell,[15]
And lodged him on the highest pinnacle.*
Here still afloat and fluttering by his side,
He thus accosts him with insulting pride:—

"'There, if thou canst, I destine thee to stand,
To view the city now at thy command.
But if thou wouldst the Son of God be hailed,
Which much I question, having so prevailed
On thy weak body;—just below thee see
Crowds who forsake their prayers to look at thee.

---

[14] Solomon had three palaces, or houses, in Jerusalem; the first, the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii. 2, like our St. James's; the second, the house of Pharaoh's daughter, 1 Kings vii. 8; and the third, his own dwelling house, which was thirteen years in building, 1 Kings viii. 1, which last is generally, in the maps of Jerusalem, near the banks of Siloam, opposite to Millo. The tower of Ophel is placed a little easterly of this place, near the fall of Siloam into Kidron.

[15] The old tower of Solomon's temple was of the nature of a porch, and very magnificent, as it is described, 1 Kings vi. 3, and 2 Chron. iii. 4, from both which passages we learn that it was twenty cubits long, ten cubits broad, and a hundred and twenty high (sacred cubits); and consequently, the temple itself reaching but to thirty cubits, this must be four times the height of it; and Herod's was not inferior.

* Matt. iv. 5.

Thee from yon court the vested priests perceive,[16]
And half their sacrifice unfinished leave;
While from the next with lifted eyes and hands,
In wild amazement Israel gazing stands.
In the third court, thick kneeling at the gate,
With equal wonder see the Gentiles wait;
They leave their victims struck with holy fear,
And think they see some God or hero here.
If thou wouldst set thy injured nation free,
As Judas did — the valiant Maccabee,
The time is come thy wishes to fulfill;
Thy people groan, and fate awaits thy will:
Let them no more these marks of bondage bear;
Go drive yon eagle proudly perching there;
Display thy power on all who would oppose,
And with thy thundering arm transfix thy foes.

"'This fair occasion courts to mighty things,
Worthy of thee and thy long race of kings.
See on the right a most attractive prize,
Antonia's tower devoid of soldiers lies.
The Roman youth, regardless now of war,
Sport in great Herod's amphitheatre;
Or else, by Zion's tempting beauties won,
Resign their arms and own themselves undone.

[16] The altar whereon the sacrifices were offered, was not within the covered part of the temple (for what should they have done there with the smoke of so vast a number of sacrifices?), but *sub dio*, in the open air, in a court; incense only being offered within the temple. Into this court the priests only came; as into the second, none but Jews with their sacrifices, whence they were taken in by the priests. The third was the outward court, or that of the Gentiles.

Thus interest, honor, call thee to the field,
And show the spot where vanquished Rome must yield.
If then the sense of injured virtue warms,
If incense pleases, or ambition charms,
If fired by glory thou wouldst e'er fulfill
Thy sovereign pleasure—the Almighty's will,—
That will which ratified the stern decree
That men and angels should submit to thee,—
Plunge in the sight of the admiring town,
Or in the altar's flame move gently down.
So shall mankind becoming honors bring,
And men and angels hail their God and King.
Nor canst thou deem, if Lord of earth and skies,
What I propose a daring enterprise;
Since David's harp thy preservation sung,
When with these notes the spacious temple rung:—

PSALM XCI.

"'Bless'd is the man whose sure defense
Is faith and heavenly confidence!
Thrice bless'd who, compassed round with hosts of foes.
Can on the everlasting arms repose!
Nor will that God whom thou thy hope dost make
Refuse to hear thy gasping cry;
Nor will he helpless let thee die;
Nor will he thy defenceless state forsake!
See with what haste celestial guards above
At his command fly circling round,
And make thy dwelling sacred ground!

"'See with what haste they to thy succor move!
With what officious embassies of love!

These above, soft hovering o'er,
These behind and these before,
Thou canst not ask for more!
Thee these gentle guards shall bear
Unhurt through yielding air
On their soft wings, and set thee lightly down,
Lest thou shouldst crush thy foot on some relentless stone.'

"He ceased from speaking; when our Lord replied,
Fixed on the pinnacle by Satan's side;
Repulsive sternness sat upon his brow,
Which wore no frown but seemed serene till now:
'I own those truths thy lips from David took,
But feel indignant at the tongue which spoke.
Perverted truth recoils upon thy head,
And to thy falsehoods gives a deeper shade.
If Satan would to prophecies appeal,
And learn from thence the doctrines they reveal,
His eyes may find what angels have admired,
By Moses written, and by God inspired,
When murmuring Israel went through Paran's coasts;
Thou shalt not basely tempt the Lord of hosts.'

"The fiend repulsed, with inward malice burned;
Yet full of guile his dark reply returned:
'I am not hurt, nor did I think to find
Ignoble views in thy exalted mind;
Sublimer glories lead thee to disdain
Those narrow spots where monarchs fight and reign.
Thy soul expanded testifies thy birth,

Born to command and renovate the earth.
Come then with me one airy journey more,
And see what treasures lie reserved in store.'

"These words the tempter had no sooner said,
Than he our Lord to Olivet conveyed,
From whose high summit he surveyed below
Enshemesh near, and beauteous Jericho.
From thence they move through trackless ether on,
Not far from Gilgal and old Bohan's stone.
His flight renewed, they instantly proceed
O'er Jordan's stream, nor ford nor ferry need;
And on arriving on the eastern side,
Ed's doubtful altar all in ruins spied.[17]
And near to Adam's and Zaretan's town
On Pisgah's top he set the Saviour down.

"This sacred mount, as well the tempter knew
Some ages past Jehovah chose, to shew
To favored Moses Canaan's land, which spread
On each side Jordan to its fountain-head.[18]
'T was here, concealed, the sly seducer learned
How distant objects were with ease discerned.
To this he added what experience taught,
And a false optic to the Saviour brought.
His magic arts delusive scenes prepare
Of well-wrought figures formed of pliant air.
With living colors he adorned the whole,

[17] Doubtful, because geographers can not agree on which side of Jordan to place it.

[18] See Deut. xxxiv. 1, 2. All the land of Gilead unto Dan, all Napthali, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah.

And spread enchantments to ensnare the soul.
Towns, cities, kingdoms, bird, and beast, and man,
Arranged in order, Satan thus began:—

"'With safety guided by my skill and care
O'er hills, and vales, and plains, and fields of air,
Here will we rest and fix our short abode
To view those works which men ascribe to God.
Whate'er thou seest, romantic, good, or fair,
Which ocean's shores and earth's wide surface bear,
From east to west both lands and seas are mine,
And 't is my purpose to confirm them thine.
That barren plain which hesitates to boast,
And lies southwest, is vast Arabia's coast.
Those beasts and men that travel on the sand
Are richly laden from a foreign land
With precious cargoes, spice, and golden ore,
Which through these deserts reach a distant shore.
In this warm clime the sons of Ishmael stray,[19]
And piles of wealth to Persia's gulf convey,[20]
Whence they these treasures of the world disperse
Through various mediums round the universe.
Still further south vast Lubim's deserts rise,
Whose distant borders seem to touch the skies:
To golden sands they give perfection birth.[21]

---

[19] The Ishmaelites were some of the first land merchants, as the Phœnecians the first by sea. See Gen. xxxvii. 25.

[20] By this way all rich Persian silks, etc., were formerly carried overland, till a passage was found out by sea.

[21] The finest dust-gold being brought from the coast of Africa; and several regions in it taking their very names from spices, as Myrrhifera, Cinnamomifera.

Their lands the people think the best on earth.
But nothing here can charm thee or delight,
Or recompense us for so bold a blight.
From these wide worlds which Lubim's desert boasts
Of unknown realms and unfrequented coasts,
The eye retires some countries to explore,
Which offer gold and give us something more.
Behold that sea, — due west direct thine eye,
Where lovely islands in its bosom lie:
Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, the clusters which we see,
Delude mankind, but have no charms for thee!
To thy vast soul these sordid spots are mean,
And must be lost, or noticed with disdain.
Not fair Trinacria can afford delight,
Nor are its gardens scarcely worth thy sight.
Due north from hence behold that lovely plain,
Washed by the surges of the restless main,[22]
Which barren mountains in the midst divide,[23]
And leave a portion near the swelling tide.
Raised on its breast not far within the land,
Dost thou not see a royal city stand;
On seven ascents its gilded turrets shine,
As if erected by a hand like mine;
And near that stream, ascending over all,
On that steep rock behold the capitol:
That spot is Rome, the mistress of the world,
Which from their thrones has mighty monarchs hurled.

---

[22] The upper and lower seas; the Adriatic to the north, and the Sicilian, Sardinian, etc., to the south.

[23] The Apennines, which run longways through the greater part of Italy.

The queen of nations justly styled! yet she,
At my command, shall bow her neck to thee;
Her trembling senators thy sway shall own,
And, clothed in purple, raise thee to their throne.[24]

"'Or wouldst thou aim at more exalted praise,
And for thyself a mightier empire raise,
A tour with me beyond these mountains go,
Whose horrid summits bear incessant snow;[25]
And see a plain extended at our feet,
Where power and glory may rejoicing meet.
It stretches where Garumna's waters creep,[26]
And where the Rhine runs foaming to the deep
Washed by the British and Ligustic seas;
And for its ramparts claims the Pyrenees.
The hardy nations all their neighbors call
The people of the famed Transalpine Gaul;
Bold, active, hardy, curious, daring, brave,[27]
Proud to be free whilst others they enslave.
Yet all these tribes thou mayest with honor gain,[28]

---

[24] The royal Insignia were of this color with the Romans; and it was therefore treason for any to affect it besides the emperor.

[25] The Alps, where snow is said to lie unmelted in some places all the year round.

[26] Garumna, now the Garonne in Aquitane; it rises not far from Toulouse and Montpelier, whence running across the country, it falls, by Bourdeaux, into our ocean.

[27] This character Cæsar gave them; and a great part of Europe has found, to its sorrow, that they still retain many of their ancient characteristics.

[28] They were formerly divided into as many small Septs or Cantons as England or Ireland; as the Atrebatii, the Celts, Venetii, and twenty others.

And crowned with glory in Lutetia reign.
Then do not pause; thy choice may come too late;
For if I rightly scan the rolls of fate,
In future days a haughty prince shall rise,
And in thy name thy doubtful laws despise.[29]
If thou refuse, he shall accept my aid,
Usurp thy power, and all thy rights invade;
Nor will his pride my arts and arms disdain;
By these assisted, he by these shall reign:
In spite of thee, though distant lands rebel,
Shall reign on earth, then sit enthroned in hell.

"'If thou wouldst choose a less luxuriant soil,
In yonder sea behold fair Britain's Isle;
Whose rocky points the rolling waves divide,
Whose beauteous rivers through her forests glide.[30]
The old Phœnicians knew this wealthy place,[31]
And robbed, or traded with, her hardy race.
They seemed for virtue and adventures made,
Peace but their recreation, war their trade;
They, born for freedom, servile chains refuse,
And boldly death without this blessing choose.
Force can not bend them, but persuasions move,

[29] The Most Christian King.

[30] The three capes or angles of Britain (whence some derive the name of Anglia); the north foreland, the land's end, and Caithness; the same, if I mistake not, with the Cantium, Bolerium, and Orcas or Tarvidum, of the ancients.

[31] Strabo tells us of a Phœnician master of a ship, who traded with Britain; that he ran his vessel on the rocks when in danger of being taken by the Romans; so careful were the Phœnicians to conceal from other nations their commercial intercourse with Britain.

And kindness melts their stubborn souls to love.
If once they fix, they can not be subdued,
But wade through fire, or rivers filled with blood.
This thoughtful tribe thy eloquence may charm,
And with just views of thy ambition warm,
Their manners polish and their gold refine,
And fill their souls with virtue such as thine:—
Bid through their means discordant tumults cease,
And raise the standard of eternal peace.

"'Or if thou wilt by bold coercion sway,
And make thy word the law they shall obey,
Aided by me thou shalt the sceptre gain,
And like a tyrant absolutely reign.
But ere their hearts of steel can be subdued,
The coast of Albion must be dyed with blood.
Shouldst thou desire their firm resolves to know,
This glass will facts in retrospection show.
On Gallia's shores behold what myriads bear
With horrid front the instruments of war;
See horse and foot in dusky squadrons run,
And shields and halberts glitter to the sun.
Androgeus exiled from his native throne,[32]
Presents the cause which Cæsar makes his own.
See how they charge, retreat, and charge again;
See weighty cataphracts and iron men:
Pikes, javelins, swords, reflect the waving light,
And cross the channel to commence the fight.

[32] Some call him Androgeus, others Mandubracius, a British prince, who fled to Cæsar for succor, and assisted him against Cassibelan and his native country.

The Morine seas they cut with sail or oar,[33]
And reach with trouble the Rutupian shore.[34]
Near Dubris' point they blacken all the strand,
A thousand chariots plough the yielding sand;
Ten thousand warriors lift the weighty spear,
And darts and swords and battle-axes rear;
With hideous shouts they pierce the rending skies,
And march to grapple with their enemies.
That silver steed which proudly trots around,
And paws the sand, and beats the echoing ground,—
Which moves in state—its rider's glories shares,—
The brave, the great Cassibelan it bears.[35]
Discordant interests he together ties,
And nations armed are his unfeigned allies.
Though Rome's commanders all the world esteem,
None can contrive, intrigue, and act like him;
He ends with honor what he undertakes,
And advantageous past misfortunes makes;
Cool, brave, wise, generous, all mankind allow,
And, but his own, each tongue declares him so.
These hosts and heroes wait at thy commands,
If thou but ask them at my generous hands.

"'Thus have I offered all the world can boast
Of wealth or glory on the western coast.
But small those portions which appear revealed,
Compared with treasures India holds concealed.

---

[33] So the strait between England and France was called.

[34] The Rutupium of the ancients is supposed to have been the same with our Richborough.

[35] Cassibelan was Generalissimo of all the British forces.

In moving thither where these riches lie,
Renowned Damascus courts thy wandering eye,[36]
For earthly monarchs an enchanting prize,
A modern rival of old Paradise.
But this I know thy nobler views disdain,
And all these charms are spread for thee in vain.
Nor will I stay thee by Euphrates' side,
Though Rome's ambition and the Parthian pride[37]
This moment meet to reconcile their wrongs,
And blunt their daggers with their friendly tongues,
On yonder Isle, where haughty Herod stays
To join the congress and confirm the peace.
Nor shall our eyes in these wide regions stray,
Where mighty Indus hastens to the sea:
Here Alexander his proud flag unfurled
In dreary deserts to subdue the world.

"'Look farther on, beyond the eastern bound,
Where man imagines no more land is found.
There fields, and cities, groves, and rivers fair,
Disclose a country which deserves thy care.
No records yet its future name has shown,
To Rome and Greece it stands alike unknown;[38]

[36] Dammesek, or Damascus, or Damas (for by all those names it is called, besides Chams by the Arabians), is described by all that have seen it as an earthly Paradise. The Arabians fancy the sun has a more benign influence on this town than any other, whence the name they gave it.

[37] See Josephus, Antiq. lib. 8, cap. 5, where you have the entertaining relation of this royal congress between Vitellius, Herod the Tetrarch, and Artaban, king of Parthia, in a small isle of the Euphrates.

[38] That the Romans had no knowledge of this country, I think,

Unborn historians shall preserve its fame,
And tell mankind that China is its name.
In this new world unnumbered millions swarm,
To peace devoted and averse to harm.

"'That stream which laves the grand pagoda's walls,
And thence in two divided portions falls;—
That bridge stupendous which sublimely stands;—
That wall which stretches into distant lands,
Unconquered Magog's wand'rers to restrain,[39]
Whose bold irruptions prove it built in vain;—
These works prodigious, and superb design,
Are human efforts though they seem divine.
A prince at present fills this mighty throne[40]
With views of empire placid as thine own;
But could he thy superior virtues see,
His humbled soul would yield the crown to thee,
With calm submission own thy sovereign sway,
And feel less joy to govern than obey.

"'But though these realms bestow a boundless store,
Another prospect will present thee more.
Another world, and worlds of treasure, sleep
Beyond the confines of the western deep:
The fairest country which the sun surveys,

---

all grant; and our modern geographers believe that Ptolemy knew it little better; for though he talks of Sinarum regio, yet by his description it should be rather Siam than China.

[39] The Scythians, or Tartars, bridled by the wall of China.

[40] As Augustus reigned at Rome, and the temple of Janus was shut, when our Saviour was born, so it is remarkable, that in China all things were quiet, and the emperor changed his own name for another that signifies pacific.

Or deigns to visit with his genial rays.
Its vast extent engrosses every zone,
And calls the beauties of the world its own:
To learn the path, behold that northern waste,
And watch those crowds that through the desert haste;
See that small strait with timbers covered o'er,[41]
See how they swarm to reach the happy shore!
See with what safety they forsake the strand
Cross the wild gut, and reach their destined land!
Were both compared, thy justice must confess,
Caanan to this is but a wilderness.
In this wide region reigns eternal spring,
And smiling summer hovers on the wing.
Here beauties bloom to human eyes unseen,
The flowers are fresh, the trees are ever green:
Delicious fruits the fragrant boughs support,
And nature seems to vegetate in sport.
Creation smiles! birds, beasts, and insects play,
And dance refulgent in the beams of day.
The tract so boundless and the scene so vast,
That crowds of empires are absorbed and lost.

"'T was for thy sake I sent those myriads o'er,
Who lately pressed the continental shore;
To this world of glory to convey,
Where thou shalt hold an undisputed sway:
This promised land without reward I give,
Where all the millions of the earth may live.
And all the tribute which my lips demand
For this dominion over sea and land,—
For rights conferred, for favors freely lent,

[41] The straits of Anian.

Is only honor and acknowledgment.
Nor canst thou doubt my title to bestow
Those varied blessings I presume to show:
Prince of the air thy Father Satan made,
And storms and spirits have my voice obeyed;
God of this world by Deity I'm styled,
And like a God am placable and mild.
Yet this is all that for the globe I ask,
Which those who love me own an easy task.
Take then these worlds, and raise thy mighty throne,
And be a rival to thyself alone.
This, only this, shall the condition be,
Accept the blessing on thy bended knee.'

"Thus far the Saviour the temptation bore,
But would not hear the black blasphemer more.
Some sacred rays of light celestial shone,
Which Satan felt, and heaved an inward groan.
Before their force the bold enchantment broke;
But ere they parted, thus the Saviour spoke:
'Long have I borne thy insolence of power,
Diversely shown while waiting to devour—
With patience borne the arrogance and wrong
Which thou hast dropped from thy blaspheming tongue—
Heard all thy falsehoods—traced each vain pretense,
And now command thee—*Disappear from hence.*
The sacred writings, which our rule we make,
Restrict that worship thou hast aimed to take,
And in plain language name the sovereign Lord
To be alone in heaven and earth adored:
And those who love him must his word observe,

Since him alone must every creature serve.
Know then, that God, who scorns thy proud disdain,
Condemns blasphemers to eternal pain.'

"Convulsed with rage the prince of darkness fell,
And felt on earth the agonies of hell;
Nor could his soul these keen repulses bear,
His short-lived world dissolved in liquid air.
In horrid sounds he gave some curses vent,
And with his howlings shook the firmament:
Then to the desert hastened to retire,
Borne on a dusky cloud of sulphur, smoke, and fire.

Contents of the Fourth Book

OUR Saviour, having now foiled the enemy, the angels, who had all the time hovered over and been spectators of the combat, descend with a banquet, and sing a song of triumph on his victory; which ended, they attend him back to Jordan. The Baptist's further testimony concerning him. Our Lord, departing thence, enters on his ministerial office; and, ascending the Mount of the Beatitudes, chooses his twelve apostles, and then preaches that celebrated sermon, containing the chief heads of religion. This he begins with an inquiry after happiness; after which he gives the substance of the Ten Commandments; assuring his auditors that he came not to destroy, but to fulfill them; and instructs in almsgiving, fasting, prayer, and other duties, giving them a particular form to assist their devotion; and concludes his discourse with a lively parable of two houses, one built on the rock, the other on the sand. The sermon finished, our Lord descends from the mountain, and preaches in Galilee; working his first miracle at Cana; and at Nain, not far from it, restoring the widow's son to life. In the meanwhile the Baptist continued preaching repentance, and acquiring great veneration among the people, and even from Herod himself, at that time Tetrarch of Galilee; who reforms from all his outward vices, except his unlawful love to Herodias. Herod's criminal familiarity with her becomes public; which

Contents of the Fourth Book

John the Baptist hearing of, he comes to court, and boldly reproves the king. At which Herodias being enraged, gets him imprisoned in Macherus, and sometime after beheaded; he having first prophesied of the invasion of Galilee, and the discomfiture of Herod's army; which soon after came to pass. Aretas, the king of Arabia, being enraged at the injury done to his daughter, whom Herod had formerly married, enters his country with an army, which Herod prepares to encounter; but his forces forsake him, and he loses the day. On this our Saviour retires, with his disciples, into the deserts of Bethsaida.

From painting by Raphael.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

The Life of Christ

BOOK IV

"The conscious seaman when the tempest blows.
Feels all the horrors of surrounding woes;
But when some harbor shields him from the blast,
He grows forgetful of the dangers past:
He sees the surges, when the storm is o'er,
Subside in peace, and kiss the broken shore.
The tranquil world his eyes with joy behold,
While hills and forests flame with heavenly gold;
The face of nature looks serenely fair,
Nor storms nor vapors agitate the air;
The warring elements repose in peace,
And all the remnants of their discord cease;
Earth, air, and seas assume a diff'rent dress,
And, clothed in smiles, their gratitude express.
Thus seemed the Saviour, from whose love to man
These dreadful conflicts with the fiends began;
From vanquished hell with majesty he rose,
And when he pleased shook off th' infernal foes;
Whose furious powers the fruitless onset made,
Ere they retired to hide their shame in shade.

"The fiends removed, celestial guards appear
With songs triumphant in the yielding air;
Around their Lord these heavenly hosts descend,

Armed with that power he bade them to suspend.
These, hovering near, the night in vigils spent,
Saw each assault, and watched the great event.
Nor did these bands as mere spectators stay,
To mark the issue of the awful day;
The legions stood in glittering arms arrayed,
Each poised his spear, or grasped his shining blade.
They saw with joy the God in vain assailed,
But gazed astonished when the Man prevailed.
Yet when they saw the fiend the Saviour bear
In his dire talons through the yielding air,
They grew indignant, and could scarcely keep
Those bolts which hurled the rebels to the deep.
The angry lightnings then with fierceness shone,
And leagued with thunder trembled to be gone;
And all their valor shown in worlds above,
Displayed impatience through excess of love.
Thus angels offered their officious aid
To him by whom both earth and seas were made;
But not beyond their bounds they durst proceed,
Nor did our Lord their offered kindness need.
Yet soon he called them, when the war had passed,
To share his triumphs and provide a feast.

"The signal made, these sacred legions fly
From east to west along the trackless sky,
Ambrosial food before the Saviour laid,
And mystic wine from grapes of Eden made —
Dainties which none but angel natures know,
Or saints enjoy when sanctified below.
They leave no dregs, no sensual passions raise,

Nor mock the taste with unsubstantial joys;
But hope, and peace, and heavenly love inspire,
And warm the spirit with immortal fire.

"While some the banquet for our Lord prepared,
Others advanced and formed his shining guard;
Some pressed the ground, in air some hovering hung,
And his great plaudits in these numbers sung:—

"'Hail, Son of God, announced, confessed, approved,[1]
Saviour of man, and head of angels, hail!
Thee thus adored we sing; thus cast our crowns
With trembling awe at thy triumphant feet.
Before these worlds, thou from the mount of God,
When Lucifer had half dispeopled heaven,
Led'st forth th' embattled seraphim to fight:
Then, at the head of his rebellious war,
Didst seize th' arch-traitor, all his bands disperse,
And crush them underneath thy flaming wheels.
We saw them from the battlements of heaven
Tumbled abruptly down; and chaos wide,
Struck with a dreadful flash of unknown light,
Shrink back his sooty waves, and inward roll
To find a new abyss; till wheeling down,
Like falling stars, these exiled sons of heaven

---

[1] I was so well pleased with the song of the angels in Milton, on the same occasion, that I had a desire to try what I could do in that sort of verse; though I have but one precedent for introducing blank verse into a poem composed of rhymes, and that is in the Essay upon Translations, written by a person of quality in our own language. How I have succeeded in it, must be left to the reader.

On its black bosom hissed, thick sprinkled o'er
With scattered drops of hot sulphurous flame.

"'Thy foes confined, Thou, O Eternal Word,
Didst will creation from the dreary void,
High hills, rich dales, sweet springs, sea, earth, and sky,
And those ethereal lamps which flame above
To light the Lord of the creation, Man,
The last and best display of power divine.
His godlike form thou didst with soul inspire,
Fitted to know and love thee; and, designed
To fill those seats th' apostate spirits lost,
Didst place him in a paradise below.
The fiend in the prophetic glass beheld,
And gnashed his teeth with rage and rancor fell,
That earth-born man should rule so fair a world;
Then struggling hard, burst from confinement free,
And rose through chaos and the frighted deep,
Bent on an expedition to explore
His rival's force, then grapple and subdue,
And captive drag him to eternal night.
His fatal guile prevailed; nor could weak man
The woman and the fiend, when leagued, resist.
He ate; he fell; the whole creation groaned,
And sympathized in their lost master's fate.
We sighing saw the ruins of the world:
So wide the breach we knew no remedy;
Nor could our wisdom any means invent
To expiate thy injured Father's wrath,
Punish the rebel, and the lost man restore.
Then in the council of the Eternal Three,

Thou didst stand forth and seize the mighty task,
The weight of Heavenly vengeance deign to bear,
Which feeble mortals would have crushed to hell.
The old red dragon met, O spotless Lamb,
By thy unequal arms is doomed to fall,
Though thou no thunder in the fight wilt use,
Nor aught but innocence and virtue pure.
Thou, the chaste woman's Seed, of virgin born,
The mighty serpent's vainly threatening head
Shalt crush beyond retrieve; while, full of rage,
From his wide mouth, that open sepulchre,
In horrid streams the yellow venom flows.
In folds voluminous outstretched he lies,
The wonder and the burden of the earth.
Hell's principality thou shalt destroy,
And stol'n dominion here; while thunder struck,
And headlong hurled, the grinning fiends forsake
Their temples and fallacious oracles.
What though their malice, desperate, may prevail,
Permitted, o'er thy frail humanity?
The God in safety smiles at their weak rage
While they dishonor and confusion gain.
Hell's masterpiece is, ill from good to draw;
The art of Heaven, good from the worst of ill.
Thy death, the life of man, a ransom pays
To thy just Father from a ruined world.
Thou from his bosom didst in mortal clay
Come, first t' instruct and then to save mankind.
Thy triumphs here begin, as Son of Man!
The tempter, foiled with all his boasted arts,
No frail uxorious Adam found in thee,

Nor vain consenting Eve! Salvation, power,
And strength, and might, and thanks, and praise, and love,
We thus ascribe to thee, O spotless Lamb!
Thus Hallelujah, Hallelujah sing.'

"They, ending here, their Lord triumphant bore
To Jordan's banks, where John baptized before.
The Baptist here his wonted task pursued;
And all the threat'nings of the law renewed:
The weeping crowds his artless doctrine wins,
Who penitently now confess their sins.
These (when obedient to the will of Heaven
Christ had submitted to the mandate given)
Had marked the oral evidence bestowed,
And with their voices hailed him Son of God.
But when he disappeared, in grief they mourned,
Nor tasted joy till he again returned.
But now each face, which painful sadness wore,
Put on those smiles which they assumed before

"Soon as he came, his Lord the Baptist spied;
Then with a shout—''T is he!' in raptures cried,
'See, Israel, see the Lamb of God, designed
To purge thy sins, and those of lost mankind.
Him his great Father through the clouds confessed:
The mystic Dove these eyes and yours attest.
Yet God his worthless servant did prefer,
Ere his approach, to be his harbinger;
That Abraham's sons might with due honors meet
Their heavenly King, and bow to kiss his feet.
Should our bold thoughts creation's birth explore,

This Prince did reign eternally before:
And live he must when I to dust descend,
His growing kingdom can sustain no end;
His powerful voice shall speak when mine shall sleep,
And wake the guilty from their graves to weep.'

"John having paused, our Lord again withdrew,
Attended closely by a chosen few,
Who learned from him what methods to employ
To teach mankind the road to endless joy.
From envy free, more rivals they desired,
To praise their Lord and make him more admired.
They first through Galilee proclaimed his name,
While crowds augmented as they heard his fame.
The gathering thousands swarm from far and near,
Flock round his standard, and with pleasure hear:
For every ill a remedy they find,
For age, and sex, for body, and for mind.

"There is a hill from whence, when looking down,
We see Tiberias and Bethsaida's town.
Upon its top the Saviour first appeared,
And in plain terms his Father's will declared;
On its broad summit he explained the law;
And all who heard impressed with solemn awe.
The crowds who gathered, filled an ample field,
Whose souls, awakened, to his doctrines yield.
From these, twelve plain, but honest men, he draws.
To teach mankind his gospel and his laws;
The learn'd and noble he refused to take,[2]

[2] Undoubtedly our Saviour might have chosen his apostles from

But chose poor fishers from the neighboring lake;
Men who their lives in honest virtue spent,
To toil inured, with Providence content;
That all might learn, the gifts which he bestowed
Sprang not from men, but from their fountain, God.

"Barjona first was eager to engage,
The first in zeal, in vigor, and in age.
Firm as a rock, he boldly Christ confessed;
Thence Cephas named by him who knew him best.
His brother Andrew next, of spotless fame,
Who from Bethsaida's lovely village came.
Philip was next, who did Nathanael call,[3]
Whose little story is well known to all.
Then Matthew freely did the world forsake,[4]
And left its riches for his Master's sake.
Matthew was followed by the lesser James,[5]

---

learned men; but he had great and wise ends to the contrary; namely, to humble the pride of man, and convince him, that neither birth, learning, nor any other external advantage, is so acceptable to him as holiness and virtue; and besides, to obviate such objections as he well knew would, in after ages, be made against his religion; since it was an impossible thing for such simple and illiterate men as his apostles to compose so excellent a system both of speculative and moral truths; nor could they have them anywhere but from Heaven.

[3] It is generally thought that Bartholomew and Nathanael were the same. There is little to be said for it, and nothing against it. However, Nathanael has the more poetic sound, for which reason I have rather chosen it.

[4] Levi and Matthew are generally thought to have been the same person.

[5] He is called James the Less, as is conjectured, from his stature; and the brother of our Lord, Gal. i. 19, because his kinsman, after the Jewish idiom.

Who with our Lord exalted kindred claims.
With him from Cana Simon also came,
And Jude his brother — each well known to fame.
These three to Cleopas did Mary bear;
Judas came next, our hapless treasurer.
Thomas was chosen, though but half a birth,
To spread salvation through the earth.
Then we, who speak to you, obtained the grace
To close the lists of this exalted race.
No base ambition taught us to aspire;
Our conscious vileness checked that bold desire.

"This being done, he all those laws revealed
Which from the wise and prudent are concealed.
What truths sublime did our great Master teach,
Above the arts of eloquence to reach!
He claims the foremost rank in our esteem: —
No man e'er spoke, or ever lived like him.
No artful sorceries of words he tried,
Of Roman sophistry, or Grecian pride; —
Courted the mean, before the haughty bowed,
Or stole applauses from the thoughtless crowd.
Truths from his lips with strong persuasion shone,
Sanctioned by power divine, and yet his own.
They probed the heart where'er their influence came,
And warmed the bosom with celestial flame.
Hear then a part of truths which Christ expressed,[6]
And from these specimens infer the rest.

[6] I can not say that I have wrought in every particular passage of this most excellent sermon, as it is left us entire in the fifth, sixth, and seventh of St. Matthew, and in some fragments in other of the Evangelists, being a complete summary of our Saviour's law, at

OUR SAVIOUR'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT

MATTHEW V., ETC

I

"'Misguided men! too justly you complain,
Your search for happiness is made in vain;
For what you clasp is not less false than fair;
It tempts and cheats you with delusive air.

"'There are who fancy they on bliss lay hold,
When their strong chests are filled with Ophir's gold;
They gaze with rapture on the glittering ore,
And think their bliss increases with their store.
These drossy minds are mixed with more alloy
Than taints that wealth they struggle to enjoy;
For while they trust to substances so frail,
Which rust may injure, thieves break through and steal,—
Which hills may bury, accidents annoy,
Earthquakes demolish, raging fires destroy;
They make that happiness they deemed so sure,
Doubtful, uncertain, fragile, insecure.

"'True bliss exists, in this precarious state,
Beyond the reach of accidents or fate.

---

least, as far it relates to practical truths. But I think I have not omitted many things remarkable in my Paraphrase upon it; in endeavoring to give, as nearly as possible, the utmost and largest import of every expression in the particular Beatitudes; under each of which I have ranked what seemed reducible to it in the following verses and chapters, adding the contrary woes from St. Luke's Gospel.

Though sought in vain, 't is always in your power,
And scorns the influence of a luckless hour;
Its lovely form is for itself desired,
As gold by misers is as gold admired.
But gold, confined to earth's polluted shore,
Clogs the bold spirit that attempts to soar.
The ease and pleasure which its vassals find
Sport with their pride, and sensualize the mind;
And when they leave that wealth of which they boast,
It casts them naked on an unknown coast.
Terrestrial pleasures therefore can not be
The solid basis of felicity.

"'Meanwhile that bliss, the way to which I teach,
Which neither fate nor accidents can reach,
Warms those who hold it in life's varying stage,
By climes uninjured, unimpared by age;
And when that hour arrives which seals their doom,
It comes with joy, and bliss survives the tomb,—
Shines more resplendent than the solar ray,
And beams with beauty through eternal day.
Eternal woes are both remote and near
To such as only lay up treasures here.
Substantial bliss is sooner found by them
Whom for their poverty the world contemn;—
Who, when their conscience and my honor call,
Learn to despise them, and abandon all.
Who use the gifts which Providence affords,
As faithful stewards, not as wasteful lords—
These, rich in faith, to heaven their footsteps bend,
And claim a kingdom which shall never end.

II.

"'Unwary youth, in quest of vain delight,
Drive headless on, and seldom choose aright;
The glittering phantoms flatter to betray,
And urge them headlong on their fatal way.
These by their furious appetites are driven
To disregard the various calls of heaven: —
To seek those woes the fallen angels share, —
To grope for happiness, and find despair.
Can then precarious and uncertain joys,
Which prey on vice, which serious thought destroys —
Which soon expire — can these the sources be
Of godlike man's supreme felicity?
Presumptuous youth! ah, whither wilt thou run!
Why travel hard to prove thyself undone?
Suspend thy madness, and at last return,
And view the causes which thou hast to mourn.
Who mourns his sins, while future moments last,
Improves the present, and redeems the past:
How changed from those, whom with new eyes they see
Consume their days in thoughtless jollity!
These must in flames lament: — while such as here
Bedew their cheeks with a repentant tear; —
Whose pensive bosoms heave with pious sighs, —
Whose thoughts weigh anchor and explore the skies, —
Who pant for him who, though unseen, they love,
And seek for happiness in things above —
Shall find their toils in Abraham's bosom cease,
And rest forever in eternal peace.

III.

"'With vain attempts some aim their names to raise,
And madly hunt for undeserved praise;
Their reeking swords they bathe in human blood,
And dive for honor in the crimson flood;
Unhinge the world, and boast their trophies won,
From nations vanquished, and from realms undone.
Alas! such glories float on fleeting breath,
And rarely live beyond the hero's death:
The gaudy nothing soon as hatched is flown,
And lodged with others is no more our own.
He then who here his happiness would find,
Grasps at a phantom, and will prove it wind.

"'True magnanimity my laws impart,
But fix it in a meek and lowly heart,
Which lies so low 't has no rough storms to fear,
But can unmoved the rolling thunders hear.
Soft is the texture of a humble mind,
Where wrongs may strike, but not an entrance find;
Which bears unmoved the insults of the throng,
The shafts of spite, and slander's foulest tongue.
When you are injured, base returns decline,[7]
Repress your wrath; the vengeful rod is mine.
False is that liberty which leaves you free
To love your friend and hate your enemy.

[7] An elevation of the Christian doctrine, as Dr. Hammond observes, infinitely beyond the Heathen Theology. Homer, their greatest man, introduces his imaginary goddess of wisdom, encouraging Achilles to *rail* heartily at Agamemnon, though he was not to strike him.

My followers must to nobler views aspire;
My grace exalts the human nature higher.
If then you would my genuine servants prove,
Bless those that curse; and such as hate you, love.
Pray for their lives who scarcely let you live;
And as forgiveness moves your hopes, forgive.
These godlike deeds will make your virtues shine,
And look like his whose works are all divine;
Whose fruitful rains and quickening sunbeams fall
On those who hear him, or reject his call.
Exalted thus, my faithful friends shall rise
In holiness like him who built the skies.
Thus shall true meekness lasting conquests gain,
And o'er the nations in full triumph reign.

IV.

"'How few we find who true attachment show
To aught but vain and fading goods below!
For ease and wealth ambitious man contends,
Nor turns his thoughts to bliss which never ends.
He climbs the steep with unremitting pain,
Nor thinks a grave must bound his utmost gain.
Success with some will their bold efforts crown;
These seize the world, and call its joys their own:
Their benefactor such refuse to know,
And on his bounties press to endless woe;
To smiles or terrors these disdain to yield,
And hold their hearts against conviction steeled.
High fed and wanton pride assumes the rein,
And leads its victims through false joys to pain;
Thus doubly blinded they neglect the poor,

While Lazarus starves, or begs from door to door.
But soon the day which retributes will come,
When these shall sink to meet their final doom,
And, bound in flames, solicit, but in vain,
One drop of water to assuage their pain;
While Lazarus, used to suffer and obey,
Shall shine with glory in unclouded day.

"'Thrice happy they, for they alone are mine,
Who thirst and hunger after food divine;
Whose heavenly thoughts sweet meditations fill,—
Who nobly aim to do my Father's will.
These live by faith, and firmly can repose
On him who all their wants and sorrows knows.
For truth and virtue be your cares expressed,
Nor doubt that Heaven will answer for the rest.
Why are your thoughts with anxious fears dismayed?
God wants not love nor power to give you aid.
Who gives the greater will the less provide,
Nor food withhold, since life is not denied.
Behold the feathered nations of the air,
Arrayed in plumage exquisitely fair,
Devoid of thought they warble forth their notes,
And tune his praise with their melodious throats;
They neither sow, nor reap, nor plant, nor plough,
Yet find a feast on each luxuriant bough.
Then, shall not God, who feeds each beast and bird,
Provide more amply for creation's lord?
Your anxious carkings agitate the mind,
And drive that comfort men expect to find.
Fear not for raiment, though compelled to go

Beneath your rank, undignified and low;
Nothing but vice should give you cause to grieve,
Or fill your bosoms with regret to live.
For honest poverty, though not your choice,
When sent by Heaven, demands a grateful voice.
Behold these lilies, which unheeded grow,
And spread their beauties in the vale below;
Such are their robes extracted from the soil,
For which they weave not, neither spin nor toil;
That David's son, though richly covered o'er
With gold and purple from Sidonia's shore,
In borrowed glories had but meanly shown,
Compared with these which humbly boast their own.
He then whose hand the fading herb supplies,
Which lives this moment, but to-morrow dies,
With food and raiment will much more provide
For all *their* wants who take him for their guide.

V.

"'Revenge and war the guilty world divide,
Injustice, rapine, cruelty, and pride.
That man is bless'd, who, full of love, bestows
On all mankind that mercy which he knows;
Who feels for others, and their wants relieves,
And like a God their injuries forgives;—
With rigor judges when his deeds he weighs,
And those of others candidly surveys;
Not born to cater for himself alone,
He nobly makes another's case his own:—
In this just mirror all thy actions see,
And do by all, as all should do by thee.

VI.

"'Vain are those arts which foolish men devise,
To cover truth with sophistry and lies!
Traditions teach you, that your bodies pure
Preserve your minds from stains of sin secure.
Whatever vain pretenses these invent,
I ask the heart, nor am with less content:
This purged from sin, and filled with heavenly love,
Becomes a temple for the mystic Dove,
Whose sacred feet disdain to take their rest
On the base soil of a polluted breast.
Your hands, and eyes, and hearts must all be free
From lustful fires and foul adultery.
The hand, if guilty, and the wandering eye,
Must be removed, or all the parts will die.
Each secret glance which glows with lawless fires,
Lights in the soul a train of loose desires;
While every touch of a forbidden hand
Breaks and opposes the divine command.
Vain are your hopes, if these you nurse, to hide
Effects from God, in their dark causes spied;
Whose eyes at once through worlds unnumbered roll,
And mark the workings of the human soul.
Better, than lose that bliss the righteous find,
To enter life though only lame or blind.
Rather than sin, your appetites deny,
And die like martyrs for true chastity,
Through faith repelling every poisonous dart,
For those are glorious who are pure in heart.
Who nobly thus their mental powers employ,

Shall share those triumphs angels now enjoy, —
Triumphs, which here shall on their bosoms shine, —
Prepare their souls for happiness divine,—
Exalt their spirits to the realms above,
And crown them there with everlasting love.

VII.

"'What swarms we see displeased with common fame,
All eager hunting for a sounding name,
These proudly bid triumphal arches rise,
And rear the column to assail the skies.
Vile apotheosis! — these gods must die,
And some for crimes in endless torments lie.
Thrice happy they, who peaceful triumphs gain,
Who raise an empire in themselves, and reign;
Who find employment in this mortal state
To preach my laws, and give them all their weight,—
Who gospel truths among mankind disperse,
And bear these tidings round the universe.
If all would practice what these men advise,
The field of blood would be a paradise.
But ere the world beholds this happy state,
My faithful friends must meet a heavier fate;
The truths they teach will raise a host of foes
To thwart their views and harass their repose;
Murder and blood my injured saints will stain,
And devastations desolate the plain.
Hell-born ambition will invade the skies,
And pride and avarice in succession rise.
Then such as boldly for my gospel stand,
Unrighteous men with vicious names shall brand.

Who speaks of peace, to vice resigns his breath,
Or starves a martyr in the arms of death.
Yet while enthusiasts by apostates styled,
And as opposers of their deeds reviled,
These saints, to whom opprobrious names are given,
Are owned above as favorite sons of Heaven.

VIII.

"'Some, from their thirst inordinate for praise,
Erect an idol with the name they raise;
Their reputations from ambition form,
Move at her call, and round her standard swarm.
Should these involve you, learn from hence to know,
The man I censure is the Saviour's foe.
Each friend of mine must struggle to despise
What vain ambition teaches all to prize;
Nay, when my honor calls you to the field,
Your reputations to reproach must yield.
What though the world its hateful malice show,
Denounce its vengeance, and its curses throw,—
As false apostles stigmatize your fame,
And basely rob you of a virtuous name?
Your time of suffering will be shortly past,
And you in heaven be recompensed at last.

"'The day will come, when you despised must share
Those foul abuses which your Lord must bear;
When you, from synagogues and councils hurled,
Shall be repulsed as troublers of the world.
Then is the time your piety to show,
And do it credit wheresoe'er you go.

As salt to season an unwholesome race,
Your honor lies in combating disgrace.
Lights of the world you shine, that all may see
In your just mirror what they ought to be.
Yet, should they evil for your good return,
Condemn your spirits, and your bodies burn,
Amidst these ills supremely bless'd ye are,
If, free from crimes, these woes for me ye bear.
In patience wait, and be no longer sad,
Exult, rejoice, and be exceeding glad.
With joy to Heaven direct your hymns and prayer;
A crown of glory waits your sufferings here.
You first immortal from the dust shall rise,[8]
And nobly swell the triumphs of the skies.

"'But do not think, whate'er deceivers say,
That Christ to Heaven affords a nearer way.
The truths I teach, will not repeal or break
Those laws which God from Sinai deigned to speak.
From him I came to suffer, and fulfill,
But not destroy, that transcript of his will.
To me the types and ancient shadows tend;
In me they centre, and obtain their end.
Laws which of moral obligation are,
Be it your work, your pleasure, and your care
To keep secure: their force will be displayed

[8] It was an opinion generally received by the primitive Christians, that the martyrs, nay, the confessors and eminent saints, should rise before the rest of the dead; whence that suffrage in their ancient Liturgies, *ut partem haberet in resurrectione prima*, for a part in the first resurrection.

When hoary nature shall in dust be laid;
No jot or tittle of the whole shall fail,
Though vice should reign or righteousness prevail.
In awful sounds they were to Moses given,
Amid keen lightnings, by the voice of Heaven.

EXODUS XX.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

"'Jehovah speaks, attend with love and fear,
From Egypt's bondage saved — O Israel, hear!

I.

"'Let no false gods thy love and praise divide,
Nor hope from Heaven thy treacherous deeds to hide.

II.

"'If by an image thou express thy God,
The child unborn shall feel his vengeful rod.

III.

"'Thou shalt not take thy Maker's name in vain,
Nor sacrilegiously his rites profane.

IV.

"'Six parts of time to thee are freely given;
The seventh is sacred, and reserved by Heaven.

V.

"'If long thou wishest to enjoy thy land,
Obey thy parents in each just command.

VI.

"'Let not thy hand with human blood be red;
For his who sheds it shall by man be shed.

VII.

"'Avoid adultery as a heinous crime,
Nor aim thy neighbor's honor to defame.

VIII.

"'Of deeds dishonest shun the tempting gain,
And earn thy bread with honest sweat and pain.

IX.

"'Bear no false witness, nor forswear thy word;
Thy thoughts and deeds are naked to the Lord.

X.

"'Thou shalt not covet what is not thine own,
Nor seize from others what is theirs alone.

"'Let all these laws engross your earnest care;
To these add fasting, charity, and prayer.
But lest your fastings unsuccessful prove,
Avert no dangers, and no ills remove,
Do not like hypocrites distort your face,
Who make wry looks a mark of deepest grace;
Who in rough robes or gloomy sackcloth dress,
And mock humility in pomp express:—
With whips and lances lacerate their skin,
And cherish pride to mortify their sin.
These place religion in external show,
And know most things but what they ought to know.
Dispense your alms as stars shoot silent light,
Untracked and copious through the realms of night;
In all these actions ostentation shun,

Nor show compassion to be more undone.
They shall not pass without a due regard;
God is their witness, heaven is their reward.
Discreet, yet warm and zealous, be your prayer,
And strong in faith as those of angels are.
Hence your petitions, rising in your breast,
In words like these should be to God expressed:—

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"'Almighty Lord! whose throne erected high
Is fixed in light above the starry sky;
Let all thy works revere thy sacred name,
And earth and heaven creative power proclaim.
Let thy dear Son his promised empire gain,
And sinful nations own his sovereign reign.
Let hell's proud kingdom through the world decay,
And men as angels own thy righteous sway.
To our frail bodies daily bread assign,
And feed our souls with nourishment divine.
O Thou, through whose redeeming love we live,
Forgive our sins, as debtors we forgive!
Save from temptation those who trust in thee,
From present ills, and future misery.
Thine is the kingdom and the power divine,
And all the glory of both worlds is thine.

"'But while to Heaven you thus devoutly pray.
Your lives must witness what your lips would say;—
Must prove the precepts which your tongues declare,
And holy fruit to full perfection bear.

Should you deficient in these fruits remain,
Your prayers are useless, and your faith is vain;
Vain your reliance on your suffering Lord,
And vain your knowledge of his sacred word.
Without repentance none can be forgiven,
Without obedience none can enter heaven.
Each light but this will like a meteor glow,
And only lead you to eternal woe.

"'Such then as truly my disciples prove,
Through faith, and practice, holiness, and love
With strict propriety may be compared
To him, whose building on the rock is reared.
This, though the floods in boiling torrents rise,
To meet fierce cat'racts rushing from the skies;
Though angry winds with maddening tempest sweep
Houses and people to the foaming deep;—
Shall boldly stand the elemental shock,
And smile securely on its native rock.
But such as merely hold the Christian name,
From baser motives, or dishonest fame;—
Whose icy notions lead them to despise
Those truths which censure and condemn their vice,
May be compared to him, at whose command
The building rose upon the faithless sand:
See how it totters when the storm is nigh,
And inundations issue from the sky!
Thus while those waves which gather with the flood
Drive the loose earth on which the fabric stood,
The building crumbles with the mouldering shore,
And insulated sinks to rise no more.'

"Thus having said, he ended his discourse,
While those who heard reflected on its force.
All seemed well pleased and happy to attend,
Praised what he spoke, but mourned its hasty end.
He then retired, and, at a nuptial feast
Soon held in Cana, was a welcome guest.
Here condescending with his friends to dine,
He turned the water into luscious wine;
And not far off, by pleasant Nain's walls,
The mournful widow's son to life recalls.

"Meanwhile the Baptist did to virtue press
Those crowds who heard him in the wilderness.
Bold was his language, and his life austere;
He feared no mortal, and he none would spare.
Nay, life itself, his holy virtue thought,
Would be too dear with servile flattery bought.
Armed with Elijah's holy zeal and flame,
All ranks were smitten with his virtuous fame.
To his acquaintance royal names aspired,
To hear, not to practice, virtues all admired.
Among the rest so often Herod went,
That some conceived him almost penitent.
With all his vices he appeared to part,
Except one last, which twined about his heart.
He for Herodias felt a lawless flame,
And stained his crime with incest's fouler name.
Fair was this princess, beautiful and vain,
Whose lord in poor Trachonitis did reign.
The wandering Arabs, hostilely inclined,
Ravaged his empire and disturbed his mind.

Compelled by these he took the bloody field,
To drive their forces which refused to yield.
His armed troops the Ishmaelites pursue[9]
Through stony plains and groves of poisonous yew;
But soon he hoped to join his spouse and court,
And all the fortunes of the war report.

"While Philip, thus intent on foreign wars,
Had left his empire and resigned its cares,
Herod invited fair Herodias down
To strong Tiberias, his own stately town,
Until his brother from the field returned
To greet his princess who his absence mourned.

"Arrived, the guilty couple lost in sense
Plunged deep in sin, and rose in impudence.
Their flagrant actions broke through every bound
Which love prescribed, or common prudence found.
Herod's amour was public in his court,
His queen's dejection, and his flatterers' sport.
His lawful consort he disdained to own,

[9] Strabo gives an account of the wild and savage temper of these Itureans, calling them rogues, and describing those parts full of caves, woods, and inaccessible mountains, so infested with robbers that the Romans were forced to keep constant guards there for the security of the country. They were, it seems, excellent archers both in Iturea and Trachonitis; the bows of the first being famous as far as Rome. And Josephus tells us that Gratus, the Roman general conquered the thieves that wasted Judea, by the help of the bow-men of Trachonitis. Bell. Jud. lib. 2. cap. 8. He also gives a pleasant account of this poor Philip, that he used to have his seat of justice carried about with him wherever he went; though he gives him withal such a character as he could not give his wealthier brother; for he says, he was a just and honest man.

And soon repulsed her from his bed and throne.
Long had her father fair Damascus swayed,[10]
And Zobah's people his commands obeyed.
The fields of Aram, and their troops, though wild,
Had blessed his reign and owned him from a child.
Through Geshur's regions famed for pastures green,
His power was known, and reached the Hagarene.

"To him enraged the queen of Herod fled
Against the rival of her crown and bed;
Complained of both with unrelenting hate,
And urged her interest to procure their fate.
Her aged father youthful anger warms,
Who full of vengeance his Arabians arms,
And meditates a quick, tremendous blow
Against his daughter's rival, lord, and foe.

"Herod meanwhile, remorseless, on his throne
Kept Philip's partner, but divorced his own.
Through all his court those deeds contagious proved,
Which most in silent imitation loved;
While all his parasites with flattering skill
Made vice and virtue serve their master's will.

---

[10] One Aretas, we are sure, was king of Damascus not long after our Saviour's time, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. That one of the same name (who was Herod's father-in-law) was king of one of the Arabias, Josephus tells us; and that his daughter fled from Herod to her father about the matter of Herodias; for which reason the old king entered his territories, and gave him battle, wherein Herod was worsted, his army forsaking him; which, the same author adds, the people looked on as a judgment on him for his cruelty against the Baptist.

At length the vices which prevailed at court
Spread by example, sanction, and report,
Till fame conveyed them where the Baptist stood
And taught mankind by Jordan's swelling flood.

"Inspired by Heaven, he hastened to the place *
To see the king, and witness his disgrace;—
To use plain speech, his conscience to alarm,
To rouse his spirit, and dispel the charm;—
To show the bane his sycophants had brought,
And counteract the deleterious draught.
Towards the palace John his footsteps bent
Through prostrate crowds who hailed him as he went.
The opening guards on his approach gave way,
Struck with an awe which bordered on dismay;
Till, every gate and antechamber passed,
He reached th' alcove of their deep guilt at last;
Which seemed an arbor fitted up to please
The sons and daughters of licentious ease.
The Baptist here for no inviting stayed;
He sought no favors, and no fears betrayed;
But pressed at once upon the guilty pair,
And charged them with reproofs they could not bear.

"Fierce Herod rose at the unwonted noise,
And sternly asked, with a tremendous voice
And eyes all flaming—'What intruders dare
Their prince's privacy destroy or share,
And rush on certain fate?'—'Nay, rather tell,

* Matthew xiv.

How dare ye bold adulterers rush on hell?'
The Baptist firmly cries. The monarch saw
And heard the prophet with remorse and awe.
Speechless he stood; Herodias did the same,
Now pale with rage, then reddening into shame.
Such is the power undaunted virtue brings
To vanquish beauty and the pride of kings.
Hard was the struggle in the royal breast,
While truth and passion each its claims expressed:
Now half averted from his tempter's eyes,
His bosom heaved with penitential sighs;
Now caught again in glances which he loved,
His weak resolves but births abortive proved.
The prince of hell, eternal foe to good,
Perceived the doubts in which the monarch stood;
Then, on his side to force him to engage,
Urged him with lust, and filled her soul with rage.
Silent he stood, while thus Herodias said:
'Presumptuous priest, thy speech shall cost thy head.
On Jordan's banks I hear thou cheatest well
The thoughtless herd with dreadful tales of hell.
Let servile wretches virtue's laws obey,
But kings to heaven can find an easier way.
Guards, take him hence, and let him learn too late.
Lodged in a dungeon, his approaching fate.'

"The king arising, with the pair debates,
And her harsh sentence partly mitigates;
Confirmed that part which ordered his arrest,
But seemed unwilling to enforce the rest;
Yet bade his guards the patriarch secure,

And within strong Macherus' walls immure.[11]
Each warrior strove to raise some just excuse
To shun an action no one durst refuse.
Some for the prisoner indirectly plead,
Who smiles and bids them to the dungeon lead.
Again commanded by the tyrant, they
With much regret reluctantly obey;
And having placed him in the prison, all
Retire in grief, where each his duties call.

"Soon after this, the tyrant summoned forth,
To celebrate the day which gave him birth,
His statesmen, captains, counselors, and lords,
To taste that bounty which royalty affords.
The rank debauch with generous wine was crowned,
And all their reason in the flood was drowned.
The midnight scenes concluded with a ball,
And wanton music consummated all.

"Among the female dancers who resort
To grace the splendors of the tyrant's court,
One daughter, who, ere base Herodias fled,
Had blessed the injured Philip's nuptial bed,
Shone in the dance superior to the rest,
And gave new pleasures to the despot's breast.
Too soon in her the world her mother spied,
The same fair face, and unexampled pride:
Like her, of slaves she had a mighty band,

[11] Some say that John the Baptist was beheaded in Macherus; others, in Sebaste. Josephus seems to be for the former, in his "Antiquities," lib. 1, cap. 10.

And could, like her, smiles, tears, and oaths command;
Like her, drop poison from her eyes and tongue,
And gain attention if she danced or sung.
It chanced when some Arabian tune was played,
The youthful sorceress all her wiles displayed;
Her feet with elegance and quickness moved,
And all who saw her, praised, admired, or loved.
The king, extravagantly pleased and proud,
Joined the applause which burst from all the crowd,
Lengthened those plaudits which her ears devour,
And stood unrivaled both in praise and power.
'I swear by heaven's unuttered Name,' he cried,
'Ask what thou wilt, it shall not be denied.
Though half my kingdom were the great demand;
My word is gone, and Herod's word shall stand.'
The damsel heard, and instantly withdrew
To see what object might attract her view;
At length, instructed by her mother, said,
'Give in this charger John the Baptist's head.'
The king exclaimed, 'Rather than that should fall,
Take, cruel maid, not only half but all:
Take my dominions, but my word release,
And let the prophet end his days in peace.'
She, old in vice, inexorable stood,
And sternly clamored for the Baptist's blood;
Nor could persuasions turn her vile intent,
Or once avert the vengeance which she meant.
The council called, their suffrages divide,
Some took the damsel's, some the monarch's side;
Some from revenge against the prophet spoke;
Through love and interest some with conscience broke;

A generous few admitted what he said,
And thought his oath was indiscreetly made,
And thence unlawful. These were overborne
By greater numbers, and repelled with scorn.
The king, uneasy, at the faction railed,
And saw with grief the party which prevailed;
At length with tears reluctantly gave way,
And bade his guards the damsel's voice obey.

"With painful search they found a hoary knave,
To take that life the monarch would not save.
He in the dungeon soon the Baptist spied,
And sternly said — 'For instant death provide.'
'That work is done,' the holy prophet said,
And, smiling, offered to the ax his head:
'Full well I know I am but mortal born;
I came from dust, and must to dust return;
The debt of nature must by all be paid,
And kings must walk through death's impervious shade.
In God's fair cause, for injured truth, I die,
And John shall smile when those who kill him sigh.
But if on life's last verge our souls can see
Within the realms of dark futurity,
My guiltless blood, within this dungeon shed,
Will be avenged on guilty Herod's head.
I see the Arabs from their quarters pour
On his domains a dusky, deadly shower.
I see —' the ruffian will no time afford,
But lifts on high his unrelenting sword;
Its quick descent an easy passage found,
And life departed through the bleeding wound.

"His head, which ruffians to the banquet bear,
Was seized with joy by false Herodias there,
Who, lest they should her cruelty delude,
Wiped from his face the warm and clotted blood;
And having viewed it, cried with savage glee,
Before the court and trembling king—''T is he.
Now, daring censures at a princess fling;
Now, if thou canst, preach on and scorn a king.'

"Short were the triumphs of this worthless guest,
And sad the tidings to conclude the feast.
In dreadful haste a messenger appeared,
Whose looks betrayed the news his tongue declared.
His clothes were dusty,—terror and surprise
Pronounced a prologue in his face and eyes.
He pale and trembling through the circle springs,
And to the king these doleful tidings brings:—
'Renowned Aretas with his hostile bands
Has gained a passage through Iturea's lands.
His troops near Cæsarea Jordan passed,
And all the higher Galilee laid waste
With fire and sword. To them strong Abel's town[12]
Its gates has opened. Now they're marching down
To Kedesh, and to lofty Ramah near,
Prepared to yield, all struck with panic fear.'

"The conscious guilt which flushed in Herod's eyes
Perplexed his measures—yet 'To arms,' he cries,

[12] Abel-Bethmaacha was a strong town near the north borders of Galilee, into which Sheba threw himself when pursued by David's army.

'With eager haste the bold invaders meet,
And stretch their leader at your conquering feet;
To his bold march present an iron shore,
From which his legions shall return no more.'
He then his troops from proud Sebaste draws,
And strong Macherus which the Arabian awes.
To these he added those of Baaras' vale,[13]
Of Carmel's mount, and Hermon's fruitful dale.
To join his force, his powerful treasures brings,
From Ismael's race, auxiliary kings.
The whole combined enabled him to boast,
Had Heaven stood still, a formidable host.
Amidst his vice the wretch to Heaven applied,
And strangely blended piety and pride;—
Ambitious offerings to the temple sent,
And more than all, half promised to repent;—
In haste a message to the prison sends,
And John's dead body offers to his friends;—
The mangled corpse directs them to inter,
That he with tears might bathe his sepulchre.
But these disguises all with ease perceived,
Nor earth nor Heaven his penitence believed;
Hence crowned with curses to the field he went;
His army fell;—you know the sad event.

"The death of John, and Herod's late defeat,
In Christ's disciples serious fears create.

[13] Josephus says Herod kept a strong garrison in Macherus to bridle the Arabians; just against which was the famous valley of Baaras, for the wonders of which that historian has been so much talked of.

The twelve with Christ in rich Capernaum lay,
And watched the frowns of each succeeding day;
In tears of sorrow these the Baptist mourned,
Till Herod frantic to his court returned;
Then with their Lord they silently removed,
And in a desert sought that peace he loved.
This safe retreat was near Bethsaida found,
Whose sons the doctrines of the Saviour owned.
The sacred precepts they had heard before,
Instead of cloying, made them wish for more.
With his loved few he therefore thither went,
And in the town some peaceful moments spent;[14]
Spoke of events which yet remained behind,
And his last efforts to redeem mankind.
Yet these at length in vice obdurate grow,
And with Chorazin find one common woe:—
Still harden more from numerous blessings given,
Till flagrant crimes provoke the wrath of Heaven.
But though his judgments are obscured by shade,
The day will come when all shall stand displayed;
Then all the swarms of this terrene abode
Shall vindicate the attributes of God.

---

[14] Bethsaida is sometimes called a village, at others a town or city; though only a village, large enough, according to Josephus; who says that every village in Galilee, even the least of them, contained 15,000 inhabitants (but surely there must be some mistake in the number). This Bethsaida, he says, was for the pleasantness of it erected into a city, and called Julius; but let it be then what it would, our Saviour's woe is now accomplished against it, and it is reduced to its first original, a lodge in the wilderness; nothing thereof now remaining, as travellers tell us, besides seven or eight scattered cottages, which scarcely deserve the name of houses.

Contents of the Fifth Book

THE apostle proceeds, and relates the miracle of the loaves; at which the multitude, surprised, would again have forced our Saviour to accept of the kingdom; but he retires from them, and continues all night praying in one of the Proseuchæ or oratories of the Jews, having sent his disciples across the lake toward Capernaum; whom he overtakes, walking on the sea, before it was day. The disciples are affrighted, till, knowing his voice, St. Peter leaves the ship and goes toward him; but, when ready to sink, he is supported by our Lord; who entering the ship, they immediately land near Capernaum; to which place our Saviour goes with his disciples, being followed by the multitude more for interest than devotion. His sermon to them on that subject, and discourse concerning eating his flesh and drinking his blood; at which the Jews being offended, many of his followers forsake him; and upon his apostles' protestation of fidelity, he prophesies that one of them should betray him. He cures the son of Chuza, Herod's steward; on which Chuza himself, who had been before a Herodian, became his disciple, with all his house. The miracle of the centurion's servant, Simon's wife's mother, and the paralytic, at Capernaum; and that on blind Bartimeus, at Jericho. Our Lord, going up to Jerusalem, curses the barren fig tree, cures one that was born blind, purges the temple of buyers and sellers the first time, and heals the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda; which last miracle, with some cursory remarks, concludes the Fifth Book.

From painting by Bida

CHRIST WALKS ON THE WATER

The Life of Christ

BOOK V

Thus far the fathers strict attention paid,
Nor any signs of weariness betrayed;
Though restless Sol triumphantly had driven
His flaming coursers to the top of heaven.
Th' apostle paused: his hearers would not stay,
But urge him on, impatient of delay—
Pressed him with importunity, to tell
Christ's every word, and every miracle.

"Our Lord," he said, "who sought to be concealed,
By his retreat was rather more revealed;
Just as the sun is with more eyes surveyed,
When half eclipsed he shines through dusky shade.
The place where Jesus and his twelve reposed,
Was by some shepherds to the towns disclosed;
Thence gathering thousands his recesses found,
And with his twelve encompassed him around.
He, on an easy hillock mounted, taught
The crowds who came, and cured the sick they brought;
With him the multitude unwearied stay,*
Till lengthening shadows showed declining day,
When his apostles anxiously desired
That all might go before the day retired;

* Matt. xiv. 15–21; Luke ix. 12–17.

For in the desert, they, with hunger pressed,
And trav'ling tired, had neither food nor rest.

"The Saviour, hearing, turned his tender eyes
Toward the multitude, and thus replies:
'Shall we from Heaven benevolence receive,
And to our guests no kind refreshment give,
Who, when keen hunger and dark night oppress,
Might faint and perish in the wilderness?
Such blessings rather as your stores impart,
Let all present them with a cheerful heart.'
Philip and Andrew, hearing this, replied,
'Whence shall we bread for such vast crowds provide?
We have two fishes which we lately took
With toilsome angling on the neighboring brook;
These and five loaves are all the stock we boast,
But ten times five among such crowds were lost.'
Our Lord rejoined — 'Proportion to your store
Your various gifts, and Heaven will ask no more.
Go then, and let the company be placed;
Give what you have, and leave to me the rest.'
These powerful words with majesty he said,
And we with wonder and with faith obeyed,
Five thousand men we placed upon the grass,
But let the rest without a reckoning pass.
A hundred troops the num'rous party made,[1]
Who for some unknown benefaction stayed;
Ranks crowding ranks behind each other spread,

[1] Luke ix. 14, 15. "Make them sit down by fifties in a company;" a hundred of which companies there are in five thousand.

Who all the wond'rous miracles surveyed.
Christ in his hands the loaves and fishes takes,
And speaks a word, or only looks, and makes.
His heart to Heaven in fervent prayer he raised,
And his great Father for each favor praised;
Then blessed and brake. — We took the large supplies,
But scarcely credited our hands and eyes —
The gifts distributed among the crowd,
Who ate, astonished at the boon bestowed.
From this small source an undiminished store
Supplied each want, and left abundance more.

"For while we gazed on this amazing feast,
Our rising wonder like the loaves increased.
'Let all the fragments of the fish and bread
Be gathered up,' our Heavenly Master said.
We rose obedient from our pleasing treat,
And filled twelve baskets with the broken meat.
These to our friends we speedily conveyed,
Who at some distance in a vessel stayed.
The shouting people shook the trembling ground,
With 'Christ' and 'miracle' the hills resound;
In grateful songs the women spread his fame,
And stammering babes were taught to lisp his name.

"Meanwhile the men in groups together crowd,
Some whispering murmured, others spoke aloud.
At length the whole, as from deliberate choice,
In words like these proclaim the public voice:
'Why should we thus the yoke of bondage wear,
Or Herod's tyranny, or Cæsar's, bear?

Has not kind Heaven a great Deliverer sent,
To cure our bodies and supply each want,
To give us life if in his cause we die,
And call assistance from the distant sky—
Greater than Moses by himself foretold,
And all the holy messengers of old?
That greatness, whence he learned a crown to scorn,
Nobly declares him for a sceptre born.
We form an army in ourselves as great
As Judas had when he controlled the state—
Greater than that which brave Matthias joined.[2]
When none but Modin's villagers combined.
Why should his bashful modesty restrain
Our public suffrage, which demands his reign?
His standard raised shall to Tiberias go;
Samaria next his powerful arms shall know;
At length in Solyma, when stronger grown,
Our prince shall mount his father David's throne.'

"The gath'ring faction palms and garments bring,
And madly shouted—'Hail, great Israel's king!'
Their dangerous kindness he in part suppressed,
And sought retirement to avoid the rest;
Against a sceptre urging his defense,
And taking measures to depart from thence.

---

[2] Josephus, "Antiquities," lib. 12, cap. 8, says, those who joined Matthias were no more at first than the inhabitants of the small village of Modin. And even when his son Judas came against the army of Antiochus, under Gorgias and Nicanor, consisting of forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse, he had no more than three thousand men, and those raw and badly armed. Cap. 11 of the same book.

Far more he seemed of friends than foes afraid,
And sought for safety in the neighboring shade.
Favored by this, and urged by strong desire,
His burdened spirit hastened to retire;
And in an arbor, where he often prayed,
Escaped that tumult which the crowd had made.
Its sides were walled, a sure defense to yield
From savage beasts which prowl by night the field.
Our Lord alone in holy hymns and prayer
Continued here till night began to wear;
But left this sweet alcove ere dawned the day,
To seek his followers toiling on the sea.

"His chosen twelve, at his supreme command,
Had left the crowd to gain Capernaum's land;
And in a vessel we forsook the shore,
Bethsaida's coasts, which joined it, to explore.
The night, though flattering, proved at last unkind,*
And left our bark exposed to seas and wind.
Though tossed with tempests, we could make no way,
When certain signals showed approaching day;
But still our eyes could scarcely see the light,
Or find our sea-marks in the stormy night.
The waves seemed angry, and our ship was tossed,
And we, half foundered, gave ourselves for lost.
Our mast was broken, and our helm was gone,
And boiling surges drove the vessel on.
Enclosed with death we thought it vain to strive,
And not one soul expected to survive.
But life is dear, some therefore ready stood

* Matt. xiv. 24–33.

To seize a plank, and shun the furious flood
On boards or rafts, if they on these could stand,
And reach, though naked, the contiguous strand.
And ere we ventured on the awful swell,
Each spoke to each, and took his last farewell.

"We scarce had ended, ere Barjona saw
A distant form which filled our souls with awe.
It seemed approaching to our shattered bark,
But this was doubtful, for the night was dark.
At length we looked: all saw it, all agreed,
Each saw the form undoubtedly proceed.
As it advanced, distinctly it appeared,
And gave new terrors to the death we feared.
Its shape was human, walking on the sea;
Each step it took created new dismay.
It seemed to all, who gazed with much affright,
Some horrid spectre roving in the night;
And as it came, we plainly could perceive
It meant to board the wreck we wished to leave.
But while with horror to the stern we fled,
The strange appearance mildly spoke, and said:—
'Courage, my friends; assistance still is near;
Behold your Lord, and give the winds your fear.'
His well-known voice with hopes and fears we heard,
But scarce believed that help so near appeared.

"Cephas, with smiles, forgetting sea and shore,
Grew strong in faith, though he was weak before;
And boldly said—'If thou the Saviour be,
Repeat thy voice, and bid me come to thee.'

Again he spoke, while rapt in joy we stood,
And beckoned Peter to attempt the flood.
He left the wreck, and trod the watery field,
Whose solid waves like rocks refused to yield.
With daring feet through unknown paths he goes,
And walked majestic as the surges rose.
But when he saw the surly ocean frown,
The hollow hanging waves look low'ring down;
When in a dreadful vale, the seas and night
Conjoined to intercept the Saviour's sight;—
The stormy winds obstruct his wondrous race,
And dash the twisted foam against his face;
Surprised with fear, he felt the slippery wave
Betray his feet, and cried—'O Master, save!'
He heard and saved; but did his fears upbraid,
And mildly asked him, 'Why he seemed afraid;
Whence he so soon could so forgetful prove,
Suspect his power, or criminate his love?'
Our vessel then the wondrous pair received,
And all with Cephas steadfastly believed;
All joined in songs the Saviour to adore,
And soon in safety reached the welcome shore.

"With tranquil hearts the sounding beach we walked,
And of our fears and recent dangers talked.
While thus engaged, the cheerful orb of day
On Hermon's hill diffused its sacred ray.
Our nets and clothes we then prepared to spread,
To meet the sun upon a sandy bed.
These quickly dried, we to Capernaum went,
To whose fair walls his steps the Saviour bent.

But ere we reached it, as we backward threw
Our wandering eyes, the lake we left to view,
We saw its side toward the western shore
With men and ships completely covered o'er;
The crowds who still remained upon the sand
With eager haste prepared to leave the strand;
To press that water their companions pressed,
And seek the Saviour on its placid breast.
Hence the soft surface of its native green,
Concealed by vessels, scarcely could be seen.
These from the shore the hardy seamen shove,
And half the bay appeared a floating grove.
So when their flight a flock of locusts take
From Lubim's wild, or Chelonidian's lake,
While Mizraim's sons their foolish ox implore
To drive the plague which hovers on their shore;
So when the west winds from their reedy coast[3]
Drive off those swarms in which their hopes were lost,
From their fair fields the straggling squadrons sweep,
And hurl them headlong in the Arabian deep;—
So looks the gulf, when they a period find
To their long voyage, driven by the wind;
From shore to shore their breathless millions spread,
And check the tide with ramparts of the dead:—
Thus seemed the lake, when from the distant side

[3] Ex. x. 19. "The Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea." I call it a reedy coast, because the sea is styled in the Hebrew, Jam Zuph, the reedy, sedgy, or flaggy sea, from the multitude of flags and weeds which grow in it, as well as on its bank; "though never so many ill weeds there," says Fuller, after his way, "as when the Egyptians were drowned in it."

The sails were spread, and dashing oars were plied:
While they with toil the Saviour's track pursued,
And in their minds his miracles reviewed.
But when the gale began to rouse the deep,
They changed their course, nor took their destined sweep;
Their numerous vessels sought the yielding sand,
And at Capernaum they safely land.

"Here with surprise they soon the Saviour found;[4]
For well they knew he had not coasted round,
By lake or sea, Bethsaida's bending shore.
No boat was there; his own had sailed before.
Arrived, they asked him how he hither came?*
For all were anxious to enjoy his fame.
He saw what motives had become their guide,
And thus with some severity replied:
'If I to gratify your pride should tell,
This would no more than my last miracle
Convince your unbelief. Too well I see
My loaves and fishes are preferred to me.
Unhappy men, you waste your time in vain
The fading riches of the world to gain;

[4] They might well be surprised to find him there so soon in the morning, knowing that his disciples went away without him; it being at least fourteen or fifteen miles from the *Mountain of Miracles* (supposing it to be south of Bethsaida, where it is generally placed) round to Capernaum; the sea being, according to Josephus, fourteen or fifteen miles long, and six or seven broad, and this voyage containing about half the length, and all the breadth of it, besides the loss of way by creeks and turnings. Both Chorazin and Capernaum now lie buried in dust and ruins. The *Pilgrim*, who saw them, tells us that even Capernaum itself consists of nothing but three or four fishing cabins near the lake.

*John vi. 25–71.

You madly toil for unsubstantial food,
And things which perish call your greatest good;
Nor once attempt to taste without alloy
That meat which saints in other worlds enjoy.
Of these repasts my faithful friends partake,
Who quit your follies for your Master's sake.
To give them life, the Son of God was given;
To purchase glory, he came down from heaven;
To prove his mission, miracles were sent;
To save mankind, he calls them to repent;
For none but these his blessings shall receive,
Who, with that faith which works by love, believe.'

"The thoughtless crowd, on miracles intent,
Despised the ends for which these signs were sent;
Each felt his soul by novelty inspired,
And all new causes of amaze desired.
Some asked for manna, which their sires despised;[5]
And some, demurring, gold and silver prized;
Ignobly sunk in laziness and pride,
The sensual vices all HIS views defied.
Each seemed ambitious to espouse his cause,
To raise his empire, but subvert his laws;
And had our Lord, his auditors to win,
Freed them from labor, and indulged their sin;—
Had he, their clamors and huzzas to gain,
Taught them in shameful idleness to reign;—
The mass, attentive to each word he spoke,
Had rescued Judah from her foreign yoke.

---

[5] It seems, the Jews desired our Lord to give them manna, which they tacitly beg, John vi. 31, and more plainly, v. 34.

"But Christ, who knew their motives and their
deeds,
From their ambition and intrigues recedes.
In all his words he recommended toil,
And nobly scorned to flatter or beguile;
Nor would perform those wonders which they loved,
To please the vanity by which they moved;
For greatest miracles which common grow,
Lose all their force, and are no longer so.
Yet thus he spoke: 'The manna Moses brought
To feed your fathers for the land they sought,
Was not from him; from Heaven the gift came down,
Its various mercies to display and crown.
Your sires partook of this material bread,
Whose mouldering ashes lie among the dead.
But great and numerous as these blessings were,
They stand eclipsed by those I now declare;
Superior blessings Heaven designs to give,
And those who eat this bread of life shall live.
In me, behold this spiritual supply,
And such as come shall eat and never die.
But know, vain men, the bread which I bestow
Suits not the taste of all who dwell below.
Material food the human frame requires;
The food I give the human mind inspires.
Who eats, renewed with vigor all divine,
Shall do my Father's heavenly will and mine;
Shall live protected till his days are o'er,
And die, to hunger and to thirst no more;
In life and death shall bear this constant sign,
By faith and holiness distinguished mine.

"'As man from Heaven derives his every good,
So with my Spirit these shall be endued;—
Against temptation find superior power,
Nor be forsaken in the final hour.
But only such as to my laws incline,
And nobly keep them,—these alone are mine:
Not earth's weak force, nor hell's infernal bands,
Shall snatch or wrest them from their Saviour's hands.
His power shall shield them; and his guardian care
To joys immortal shall their spirits bear;
And when that day, which all the guilty dread,
To endless life shall wake the trembling dead,
These sons of light, escaped from grief and pain,
Shall with the Saviour judge the world and reign.'

"These serious truths and awful scenes amuse,
And strangely harden the obdurate Jews.
Some his pretensions, some his birth deride,
And some condemn his poverty and pride.
'Was not this prophet,' they exclaimed with scorn,
'Of mean descent, a Galilean born!
In little Nazareth his parents live,
And want those alms which he affects to give.
His father works at a mechanic trade,
His mother proofs of poverty betrayed.
His mean relations mingle with our tribes,[6]

[6] These relations of our Lord, called his brethren in Holy Writ, according to the Jewish way of speech, seem to be no more than his cousins german, or sons of his mother's sister; for she that is called the mother of James and Joses, Mark xv. 47 and xvi. 1, is styled Mary the wife of Cleopas and Jesus' mother's sister. John xix. 25.

Nor take those nostrums which his pride prescribes.
Will this self-taught usurper of the sky,
His father, mother, and his friends deny?
Or must we think, by some strange magic given,
That all the family came down from Heaven?'

"Our Lord replied — 'If these you disbelieve,
How will you truths still more sublime receive?
Again I speak, attend to what I say:
I came from Heaven and am to Heaven the way.
My body bleeds a sinless sacrifice;
My flesh is bread; who eats it never dies.
My blood effused, my Godhead makes divine,
Which flows in streams to answer God's design;
Unless through these you happily obtain
Eternal life, your hopes of bliss are vain.
You seem amazed that I from Heaven came down
Without my glory, diadem, or crown;
At scenes to come will greater wonder rise,
When from my grave I reascend the skies, —
When holy angels in my train you find, —
A cloud my chariot, and my wings the wind.
O hard of heart, perverse to understand
What I reveal, or do what I command,
Your carnal minds, immersed in sensual love,
Cleave to the earth, nor soar to things above.
A mystic sense these words I speak convey,[7]
Which leads believers to eternal day.'

---

[7] John vi. 63. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the words that I speak unto you, are Spirit," etc.

"But no discourse could prejudice subdue,[8]
Remove false doctrines, or impress the true.
The thoughtless crowd, with murmuring discontent
And strong displeasure, from the Saviour went.
With disappointment they forsook the shore.
In shoals as thick as when they came before.
The Saviour saw, but sorrowed much to find
None but his twelve remain with him behind.
Then with those signs which kind compassions show,
Thus mildly questioned — 'Will ye also go?'
Straight fervent Cephas, who could scarcely bear
So close a question, asked — 'To whom, or where?
Eternal life, dear Lord, we all implore;
And this we find — and who can give us more?
We know thou must the true Messiah be,
And all our hopes and souls repose on thee.'
Again he said, while copious sorrows flow,
'I know you better than yourselves ye know;
Your various failings I with tears survey,
And mourn for him who would his Lord betray.'[9]
His secret thoughts before my eyes are spread,
Though veiled by him in fancy's deepest shade.
One of the twelve who stands before me here,
And seems absorbed in penitential prayer,

[8] It seems plain that the Jews understood our Saviour's words, "I am the bread of life," in a gross, carnal, literal sense; which mistake our Saviour endeavors to rectify. But they continued obstinate, and would not give him leave to understand his own words.

[9] "Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him." John vi. 64. This was a wonderful instance of his humiliation and submission to the Divine will, that, in obedience to it, he chose such a person for one of his family, as he knew from the very first would prove a traitor.

Allured by bribes shall violate my laws,
And act the traitor to the Saviour's cause,
Perform the part I shudder to foretell,
And move in concert with the prince of hell.
Soon will the fiend become his dreadful guest,
And fill with avarice all his guilty breast;
And when his deeds appear in public view,
My death will prove the words I speak are true.'

"Our conscious souls the accusation heard,
Each eyed the next, and for his safety feared;
Yet no one spoke, or asked him to explain
Those awful words which filled each breast with pain;
But deeply treasured what we feared to view;
And sad events, we dread, will prove them true.

"But though I strive to tell the works he wrought,
The mighty sum exceeds my tongue and thought.
While in Capernaum's fruitful coast he stayed,
Legions of devils his commands obeyed;
His hands the sick to health and strength restored;
The dead were raised by his Almighty word.
Remote and near his fame and virtues move,
And numbers trembled who disdained to love.
When our great Lord a fit occasion saw,
He preached his gospel to explain the law;
Revealed new truths, and then sublimely tells
The schemes of Heaven in lively parables;
The great designs of prophecies imparts,
Or blames the hardness of his hearers' hearts;
The veil from Scripture condescends to tear,

And shows the people what to love and fear.
Some facts remembered may acceptance find,
And these when heard must speak for those behind.

"It happened once, returning from the feast,*
Where Christ at Salem had become a guest,
He passed through Cana, where his power divine
The crystal water had transformed to wine;
But while we here within its precincts stayed,
And some provision for the future made,
A wealthy lord from rich Capernaum came,
With haste and sorrow,— Chuza was his name.[10]
The rank he bore in haughty Herod's court,
Had raised him high in popular report;
He was by Herod his high steward made,
And upper Galilee his power obeyed.
He, in his youth, by pleasure's wiles debauched,
Embraced those doctrines the Herodians broached.
These worse than Sadducees, or near the same,
Imagined virtue but an empty name;
Thought good and evil were the statesman's tools,
And heaven and hell but tales to frighten fools.
Hence all the sect voluptuously employ
Their thoughtless hours in lewd tumultuous joy;
Each some new pleasures every day contrives,
And all to wickedness devote their lives.

---

* John iv. 46–54.

[10] Lightfoot, Walker, and others think that the nobleman (John iv. 46), whose son was sick at Capernaum, was no other than Chuza, the husband of Joanna, who ministered to our Saviour and is apostles (Luke viii. 3),— which opinion I follow.

"Too long with these unhappy Chuza stayed,
By numbers sanctioned, and by vice betrayed.
His conscience, lulled by pleasure's flattering charms,
Slept too securely in her fatal arms;
But grace divine the dangerous cheat revealed,
And pointed out what passion had concealed.
His soul, alarmed, espoused fair virtue's cause,
And Chuza stood to advocate her laws.
But what, through grace, conspired this change to move,
Was fair Joanna and her virtuous love.
This lovely maiden had preserved her fame
In Herod's court, and lighted Chuza's flame.
An awe for virtue all her words inspired;
And such as yielded no assent, admired;
Her looks and modesty displayed a mein
In ancient courts but rarely sought or seen.

"Her, in the crowd, admiring Chuza saw,
And felt the influence of esteem and awe,
Her condescension quite dethroned his pride,
And chained those vices which had been his guide.
The seeds of grace in this auspicious hour,
Came to his aid and exercised their power;
Till strong like hers his growing virtues proved,
And admiration settled into love.
Determined hence to fix his choice for life,
He wooed and won Joanna for his wife.
At her request his sacred prize he bore
From Herod's court and sin's enchanting shore;
And with Susanna, whose maternal care
Had trained her mind to piety and prayer,

Found an asylum and a safe retreat
At his hereditary country seat.
They had not long in peace resided there,
Ere heaven in kindness blessed them with an heir.
The smiling parents saw with heartfelt joy
The dawning virtues of their lovely boy.
But soon a fever's unrelenting rage
Their blasted hopes does in his death presage.
The frighted parents, robbed of hope and ease,
Marked the sad progress of the stern disease;
Wept while he groaned with unavailing grief,
But felt unable to impart relief.
Bent o'er his couch the mournful mother stood,
And watched the pulses of his poisoned blood;—
Perceived the tides in quick succession roll,
Which beat a march to his departing soul.
His tongue was morbid, and his breath was short,
And strong convulsions every limb distort;
Deranged, he seizes every object near,
And all the marks of instant death appear.

"But while with tears they gave their son for lost,
They heard that on the Galilean coast
Their numerous friends had seen our blessed Lord,
And their last hopes confided in his word.
Strong was their faith; his fame and power they knew,
And each believed that Christ could all things do.
The anxious father left the dying bed,
And quickly followed where his hopes had led;
Then drives his chariot in a race with death,
And posts to Cana, or to Nazareth;

And vows, should he receive his son restored,
That he and his would glorify the Lord.

"Near Jepthael's streams he found the friend he sought,[11]
And his great message to a crisis brought.
Low on the earth and prostrate he adored,
And health and vigor for his son implored.
Christ, who, remote, his earnest vow had heard,
A serious trial for his faith prepared.
Yet well he knows, when human bosoms bleed,
How to sustain them in the time of need;
But here his patience and his faith he tried,
And his request nor granted nor denied.
Then turning to the crowd his radiant face,
He thus exclaimed—'O, unbelieving race,
How far shall infidelity proceed?
How long will you these signs and wonders need?
Must faith to sense continue to submit,
Nor leave one moment for sincere regret?
Must all these miracles which Heaven bestows
Bring no convictions, while they gain applause?
Like meteors shine amidst the gloom of night,
And strike you blind with supernatural light?'

"The father all with deep attention heard,
But full of fears this anxious prayer preferred:
'My case, dear Lord, admits of no delay,
Nor can my son survive the present day.

[11] A brook of that name in Galilee; the same, I think, with Shihor-Libanus.

Before I came I saw him gasp for breath,
And faintly struggle in the pangs of death;
If then thou canst departing life supply,
Ascend my chariot or my son must die.'
Christ having heard, this simple answer gives,
'Retire in peace, thy darling offspring lives.'
The joyous father from the Saviour went,
And to Capernaum his swift course he bent.
On his approach, to meet him at the gate,
Elate with joy officious servants wait,
Whose eager tongues the happy news impart
To ease the throbbings of the parent's heart;
Who full of faith, had previously believed
The joyful tidings which he now received.
'Thy son,' they cried, 'is suddenly restored,
And with his mother waits her absent lord.
For him we smile, for whom we lately mourned,
And see his vigor and his health returned.'
The father asked with carefulness the hour
That interposed to check the fever's power.
''T was on the seventh of yesterday,' they said,
'That death departed, and the danger fled.
Surprised we saw him then begin to mend,
But through what cause we can not comprehend.'
'That was the time,' the ravished father cries,
Lifting to Heaven his grateful hands and eyes,
'Precisely then the great Messiah's word
Declared my son was from the grave restored.'

"These truths Joanna heard with tears of joy,
And in her hand led forth the smiling boy,

And safe and well to the pleased father shows.
The child, well pleased, his arms extended throws,
Welcomed his sire, and innocently said,
'I have been ill, but am not sick or dead.'
Great Chuza now, with gratitude and prayers,
To all his family his vow declares.
These freely grant he could perform no less;
And the Messiah, Jesus, all confess.

"Soon after this, when Jesus further went
(The blind and lame remember this event),
Loquacious fame proclaimed his march aloud,
While doors and streets displayed a motley crowd.
The dumb declared, the deaf received, his word,
And half dead patients smiled, to health restored.
A touch, a look, their maladies removed,
And all his garments efficacious proved.

"Among this group of indigent and poor,
Who asked redress, and found or sought a cure,
A bold centurion of the Roman band,*
Inured to war, to take and give command,
Dispatched a proxy to relate his grief,
And then petition of our Lord relief;
For with his troops he at Capernaum lay,
To check the youths of factious Galilee.[12]
The cause he taught his proxy to express

* Matt. viii. 5–15.

[12] The centurion being fixed in this place, there seems little doubt but that it was a station of the Romans, of whom there was need enough in that factious country of Galilee, whereof Capernaum was one of the most considerable places, if not the metropolis.

Was simply this, for which he sought redress:
'A faithful servant, whom he brought from Rome,
Appeared to wait for his impending doom.
In various climes his faithfulness he found,
On burning sands, and snows, and frozen ground;
His arm with blood had dyed the hostile plains,
And poised the spear in thirty hard campaigns.
In fierce extremes his pulse had learned to beat,
In winter's solstice and in summer's heat.
But arduous toil and dread disease at length
His bloom had withered, and absorbed his strength;
His nervous muscles cramps conspired to bend,
And in a palsy bade his vigor end.
Helpless for years the faithful veteran lay,
A lump of half inanimated clay.
Departing strength in all his limbs expired,
And life to her last citadel retired.
What art invented or what nature made,
His friendly master ordered for his aid;
But no assistance could assuage his pain,
And arts were tried and sums were spent in vain.
Among the rest Calirrhoe's baths were tried;[13]

[13] Josephus describes these waters, both in his Antiq. lib. 8, cap. 17, and in Bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 25. He says: "They arise about Macherus, from two springs of contrary natures, one hot and sweet, the other cold and bitter; which, meeting together, have many excellent virtues, giving health, both by drinking and bathing, for several diseases;" though Herod the Great tried them in vain by the advice of his physicians, they being likely to kill him, instead of curing him. These waters are so plentiful that they not only run off, but make a fair current or river, on whose banks stood the ancient city Lasha, afterward Calirrhoe, whence the baths themselves are named, being styled by Josephus the baths of Calirrhoe.

But these the virtues they contain, denied.
The king's physician next espoused his cause,
But strove in vain to favor nature's laws.
His helpless case the master's tears deplore,
And much he sighed that he could do no more.
A servant thus for faithfulness renowned,
His generous master a companion owned;
Valiant and true, in danger often tried,
Nor gold nor fear could make him leave his side,
In expeditions forward to obey,
Nor would the secrets which he knew betray.

"'His master, finding human efforts vain,
Sought for divine, for these alone remain.
In this distress the Saviour's fame conveyed
The wondrous tidings of the cures he made.
The master rising with attention heard,
And Israel's Monarch before all preferred.
He loved the Jews, and their religion praised,
And a small temple by his bounty raised.
His servant now he hastened to convey
To Christ, and him at Jesus' feet to lay;
But soon he found him gasping hard for breath,
And struggling in the agonies of death.
He then resolved himself to Christ to go,
But thought himself too worthless, mean, and low,
Unfit to ask for blessings unprepared—
(A fact which proves he did not know the Lord,
Since none by merit were prepared to stay,—
None for humility were turned away.)

"Jairus the Saviour of the world implored[14]
To have the servant of his friend restored;
A train of friends supported his request,
And the same point importunely pressed.

"Soon as our Lord the circumstances heard,
He left the place, and to the house repaired,
His kind designs the bold centurion knew,
And much he wished, but feared an interview.
He heard and said, 'Such actions must not be,
Such condescension is too great for me;
My house, my heart, my household are too mean,
A guest so great to lodge or entertain,
But as my soldiers, when they hear my voice,
Obey my word, and know no other choice;
Attend observant on each secret sign,
And yield their wills submissively to mine;
So let Messiah, whose Almighty sway
The laws of nature steadily obey,
Declare his will and at his sovereign word
My worthy servant shall be quite restored.'

"At this reply the Saviour, looking round,
Declared, such faith was not in Israel found,
'But Israel's sons,' he said, 'shall not alone
Partake of glory and enjoy my throne.
In every nation, those among mankind

[14] Luke vii. "The centurion sent unto him the elders of the Jews." The rulers of their synagogues were chosen out of the elders; one of these rulers was Jairus with whom undoubtedly the centurion was intimate, since he himself had built the Jews a synagogue.

From painting by Richter.

THE RAISING OF JAIRUS'S DAUGHTER

Who fear and love me with a holy mind,
Shall find acceptance in the final hour,
And feel deliverance from infernal power.
For faith like this assumes a strong command,
Which Heaven itself refuses to withstand;
And while some sons of Abraham hope in vain,
These shall in glory with the prophets reign.
Go tell the Roman his request is sealed,
And his brave servant of the palsy healed.'
He said — the servant instant strength received,
And the centurion and his house believed.

"But vain were all my efforts to relate
What swarms he rescued from impending fate;—
How with a touch he Simon's mother raised,—
How him the joyful paralytic praised,—
How Jairus's daughter was to life restored,
And quickly moved obedient to his word;—
What virtues issued from the robes he wore,—
What daring insults from the crowds he bore;—
What wondrous truths his tongue vouchsafed to tell
To her who met him close by Jacob's well,
What time he traveled through Samaria's waste,
And bade her view the future and the past;—
How many, long of natural light bereaved,
Their visual orbs and mental sight received.
These truths Bethsaida's happy confines know;
And these thy gates, delightful Jericho.

"If Bartimeus, who this sacred hour
Lives a memorial of the Saviour's power,

Were here to mention what some thousands knew,
And which his eyes have seen and felt was true;
The strong relation would conviction dart,
And pierce the stoutest unbelieving heart.
The poor old man through many a doleful year *
Had walked in darkness, and had felt despair;—
Had been from earliest recollection blind,
While deeper shadows overwhelm his mind.
Despised, abandoned, miserably poor,
He lived on alms, and begged from door to door.
His feet unshod, his head with baldness bare,
Sustained each change of the inclement air.
Oft at the lovely Balsam Garden's gate [15]
These eyes have seen the reverend beggar wait,
Bending beneath the pressure of his years,
And humbly asking charity with tears.
It happened here, as Jesus passed along
Encircled closely by a moving throng,
That he the trampling of their feet could hear,
And knew some cause had brought the concourse near;
And by some impulse earnestly inquired
Who went that way? and what they all admired?
A stranger heard, and answered in reply,
That Christ of Nazareth was passing by.
Soon as the beggar heard the Saviour named,
Young hope was born, and faith became inflamed;
For he had heard what miracles were done,
And boldly cried—'Have mercy, David's Son.'

---

* Mark x. 46.

[15] For which the Jews quarreled with the Romans. See Josephus.

Some tried to quell him, some to take him thence,
And some rebuked his loud impertinence.
But all their aims to make him cry no more,
Extorted 'Mercy!' louder than before.
'Great Son of David, let me mercy find,
Oh! show compassion to the poor and blind.'

"His earnest prayers soon reached the Saviour's ears,
Whose heart and tongue conspired to drive his fears.
He paused, and called, and would no further go
Till Bartimeus told his tale of woe.
The poor old man the joyful tidings heard,
And for a journey to our Lord prepared.
With trembling haste he cheerfully arose,
And near the gate his ragged garments throws.
His useless staff increasing faith supplies,
And hope rewards him for his loss of eyes.
Groping he walked, but stumbled in the way,
Nor for a guide amidst the crowd would stay.
At length arrived, our gracious Lord inquired
Why thus he spoke, and what he most desired.
'Lord, thou canst give,' he with a sigh replied,
'Both eyes and light which Heaven has long denied.'
'Thy faith victorious,' Jesus straight rejoined,
'Displayed aright, is with my power combined,
Give glory where 't is due; receive thy sight.
And plunge at once into a world of light.'
Thus having said, immediately a skin,
Which shut the windows of his soul within,
Fell from his eyes, and thus relieved his mind,
As mists or vapors vanish with the wind.

Low on the earth he gratefully adored
The sacred pow'r which spoke his sight restored —
Smiled on the Saviour, and with language meet
Expressed his thanks, and prostrate kissed his feet.

"But time would fail, should I attempt to show
The various wonders you already know.
The blasted fig-tree you have often viewed,
And marked its vegetative power subdued;
Its withered branches thousands daily see
On the great road which leads to Bethany.
Of one born blind, perhaps your ears have heard,
Who at Siloam had his sight restored.
The angry Sanhedrim this fact surveyed,
And by their actions serious fears betrayed;
Yet while they strove the wonder to disprove,
They spread the name of Him I wish to love.
At great Bethesda, famed for maimed and poor,
He healed a man whom angels could not cure;
But, for this miracle his power had wrought,
His glorious life the Jewish elders sought."

"Too well," said Joseph, "we their envy know,
And mourn that virtue should create a foe.
I well remember many truths he taught,
And witnessed many miracles he wrought.
I heard his voice amidst the hum of trade,
And saw the changes in the temple made;
He viewed their sacrilege with eyes of pain,
And drove the merchants from their seats of gain.
I likewise saw him, when our elders brought

The fair adult'ress, in the action caught;
I heard their questions, marked their base intent,
And knew what all their captious language meant;
But self-condemned these bold accusers went,
And left the Saviour and the penitent.
Yet fame alone enables me to know
The fact your eyes at fair Bethesda saw;
And though I doubt not the report is true,
I fain would learn the narrative from you."

"There is on fame's conspicuous lists enrolled,
In Salem's market where the sheep are sold,*
A famous pool," the pious saint replied,
"Whose healing waters have been often tried;
Where those who suffer, speedy cures may find,
The deaf, the dumb, the withered, lame, and blind.
Here, when the morning sacrifice is made,
You know the power which all have seen displayed;
You know, from heaven some friendly angel brings
The gift of health on his celestial wings;
And he who first immerges in the pool
Receives a cure, and stands completely whole.

"The man I mentioned, full of pains and fears,
Had felt disease for eight and thirty years;
His friends through pity brought him in his bed,
Which near the margin of the pool they laid;
But while he waited the auspicious hour,
And mourned his sufferings and his want of power,
He saw another step into his place,

* John v. 2–10.

And seize the miracle before his face.
Such disappointments always doomed to bear,
Murdered his hopes, and kept alive despair;
He felt his torments, nor could find relief,
But spent his moments in desponding grief.
The Saviour saw and mourned his deep distress,
And kindly asked him if he sought redress.
'In death,' he said, with anguish and neglect,
'I hope for ease, but nothing more expect.
Through friends the wealthy find a speedy cure,
But most neglect, and some insult, the poor.'
'Thy woes are past,' the Son of God replies,
Infused a power, and then he said—'Arise.'
His nerves grew strong, with health his visage glowed;
His blood through long-forgotten channels flowed;
His blasted limbs their Maker's words obey;
He rose and walked, and took his couch away.
In every part the change his eyes perceived
Appeared too wonderful to be believed.

"Such crimes as these, for crimes to them they were,
Strangely provoked the Sanhedrim to war.
The Sabbath-day, on which the cure was wrought,
Furnished his foes with the pretense they sought;
And so far prejudice their minds engrossed,
That *in the day* the miracle was lost.
Yet while these actions prove he came from Heaven,
They also prove they need not be forgiven:
Those powers which either soul or body mend,
Must be divine, and can not God offend.
All works of love he publicly confessed,

Broke not that day which God designed for rest.
He blamed traditions; but he blamed them, where
With laws divine they clash and interfere.
He, full of meekness, merciful, and kind,
Obedience, faith and law, and gospel joined.
Compassion, alms, forgiveness he displayed,
And all the virtues tests of credence made.
Such proofs as these the Saviour sought and gave,
Who came his people from their sins to save.
Sometimes he spoke, and, like the seers of old,
These truths sublime in mystic figures told;
Then in plain language numerous crowds addressed,
And brought conviction to the guilty breast.
More might be said; but I begin to fear
Already I 've too long detained you here.
Important lessons I could still recite,
Replete with wisdom, profit, and delight."

The speaker ceased; but what remains, all pray
To be indulged with on th' ensuing day.

Contents of the Sixth Book

THE company having met again by appointment the following evening, St. John recites several of our Lord's parables; that of the wicked judge and importunate widow, the cruel servant, the rich miser, the pharisee and publican, and more at large that of the prodigal son. He then relates the narrative of Dives and Lazarus; which finished, Chuza, who was an acquaintance of Gamaliel, being in town against the Passover, comes to his house, and brings his friend the centurion with him; where finding St. John and the other apostles, whom he had formerly seen in Galilee, he desires a fuller account of the mysteries of the Christian faith, and of the person of our Saviour. This the beloved disciple accordingly gives him in a Pindaric ode, asserting the divinity and eternity of our Saviour, as he has done in his gospel and epistles; describing the Trinity in the greatest part of the first three stanzas; the creation of the world by the Son in the fourth; the fall and restitution in the fifth and sixth; proving our Saviour's existence before his birth upon earth, by his appearing to, and conversing with, the patriarchs in human form, and like an angel with the Israelites, in the seventh; further, in the eighth, proving him to be God by Isaiah's vision and prophecy; and that he some way or other enlightens all men, as he is the Divine Word and Essential Reason, in the ninth. This ended, Gamaliel acknowledges his conviction of the truth, the company breaks up, and the three apostles return to our Saviour.

From painting by Hofmann.

CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER

The Life of Christ

BOOK VI

Again the following eve the party meet,
And with due courtesy each other greet.
John then began — "I gladly will relate
The prodigal's return, and miser's fate;
The cruel servant and his injured lord,
Who a strong emblem of mankind afford;
The judge regardless both of God and man —
The widow — Pharisee and Publican.
Each theme presents us with a spacious field;
And all, of truths a plenteous harvest yield.

"To prove we ought repeated prayers to make
At God's high throne, and no denial take,
This pointed parable our Lord declared, —
And all with joy applauded what they heard: —

"'A judge there was, no matter where or when,*
Who acted umpire to contending men;
Grown fat with bribes, and orphans' tears and blood,
The wretch, dishonored, on no conscience stood.
A widow near him charged a cruel lord
With bathing in her husband's blood his sword.

* Luke xviii. 2–8.

Poor and defenseless, and exposed to wrong,
She felt the rage of each malignant tongue;
Oppressed by power and unfriended by the laws,
She found no friend to advocate her cause;
She held no gold, or not enough to bribe
Or oil the organs of some smooth-tongued scribe.
In this distress, not knowing what to do,
Which way to stir, nor yet to whom to go,
She took strange steps her ruin to prevent,
And to the fountain of injustice went.
There with loud cries besieged the judge's door,
And boldly begged him to assist the poor.

"'The wretch, at first regardless of her cries,
Soon grew perplexed with her incessant noise;
And bade his servants who around him wait,
To teach his dogs to drive her from the gate.
But this base task the servants found in vain;
The banished widow soon returned again,
Disturbed his meals, alarmed him when he slept,
And round his palace ceaseless vigils kept.
If she perceived him to the bench repair,
Visit his friends, or ride to take the air,
She, closely watching all the turns he made,
Dogged like a ghost, and haunted like a shade.
Where'er he went, her cries were always found,
And "Justice, Justice," through the streets resound.
In vain he rages, threatens, fumes, and swears,
His oaths and curses but augment her tears;
And while his officers the lash apply
To make her silent, they increase her cry.

"'At length his anger turned to serious thought,
Which in his breast this selfish reasoning wrought:
"Although," he said, "I feel no love nor care
For God or mortals — but contempt for her,
I must avenge her of her deadly foe,
Or be tormented wheresoe'er I go.
My rest is broken when I lie in bed;
And if not silenced, she will talk me dead."
Determined thus, he ordered her to come,
And state her grievance in the audience room.
She spake; he heard, and granted what she sought,
And from base motives did the thing he ought.
And while her foes their punishment deplore,
She raised her siege, and left his lordship's door.

"'From hence this moral every heart may learn,
And every eye conspicuously discern:
If importunity the worst can sway,
And brave injustice in the face of day, —
If it prevail in this terrene abode
With foes of men and enemies of God,
It must succeed when it ascends the sky,
And pleads with him who reigns enthroned on high.
Not that Jehovah can be tired with prayer,
Can act unjustly, or supinely err;
Yet, though disposed to listen with regard,
For all his blessings man is unprepared;
Till faith and hope from penitence arise
To fit his bosom for divine supplies.
He, armed with vengeance, can support alone
Those souls who now beneath the altar groan.

The wrongs they suffer, justice shall repay,
And strike their foes with terror and dismay.
Thus while his justice punishment secures,
Through me, his wisdom makes his mercy yours.'

"We heard this parable with pleasing dread;
When thus the Saviour, in another, said:—
'A wealthy lord, just and benevolent,*
Ten thousand talents to his servant lent,
Who lived luxurious till the whole was spent.
His lord suspected from the course he took,
That much was wasted, and surveyed his book;
When strong surmises to assurance turned,
And much the master for the servant mourned.
He saw distinctly on a cool survey,
He could nor principal nor interest pay;
He strictly then the whole amount demands
Of all the talents trusted in his hands.
Speechless and pale the wicked servant stood,
For conscious vileness had congealed his blood.
His injured lord, most justly unappeased,
Ordered that he and all he had be seized;
When at his feet th' insolvent debtor fell,
Begged time, and promised all he had to sell,
And all the bounties of his friends to try,
Rather than languish in a jail and die.
These artless methods quite successful proved,
His words and tears the generous master moved;
Nor would he seize him, and his house enslave,
But through compassion all the debt forgave.

* Luke xvi. 1–8.

This wretch, dismissed, a fellow-servant met,
Who, when they reckoned, owed a trifling debt;
A hundred pence composed the whole amount,
Which, when discharged, would balance the account.
This petty tyrant him with furious hands
Seized by the throat and every mite demands.
Low at his feet his fellow-servant lay,
Begged time, and promised all he owed to pay;
But anguish here could no advantage gain,
And prayers and sorrow urged their plea in vain.
He straight was chained and into prison thrown,
But soon his case was to his fellows known;
Who feared that doom their tears in vain deplore,
And these transactions to the master bore.
He heard, and for his wicked servant sent,
And thus indignant gave his feelings vent:—

"'"Detested wretch, inhuman and severe,
Deaf to distress, and blind to every tear!
Did not I teach thee, by my favor shown,
To feel his woes, and make his case thy own?
Did not thy lord remit the mighty sum
At thy entreaties, and reverse thy doom?
Go thou to prison, and thy fate deplore,
And think of mercy and reprieves no more,'
Thus shall the justice of my Father do,
Thus pour his vengeance on the world and you;
Unless you learn your brethren to forgive,
And copy Heaven while here on earth you live.

"'Would you the riches of the world contemn?
Learn from what follows how to value them.

The fate of vice may virtue's cause befriend,
And therefore listen to the miser's end.

"'There was a miser whose unbounded hoard*
Surpassed the treasures of the wealthy lord.
His vast domains on every side arose,
And falsely promised to his soul repose.
His bags were full, his chests were running o'er,
His barns and coffers could contain no more.
In every corner of his yard he sees
Huge stacks of corn and spacious granaries.
Though doomed the curses of the poor to hear,
He hoped a famine in the coming year;
And with strange feelings felt his bosom glow
With wealth arising from the public woe.
Oppressed with gold, and sunk in worldly care,
He no attention for his soul could spare.
Perhaps he fancied he might always please
Her views, with riches, or voluptuous ease.
The wretch, revolving what strange course to take,
Resolves new granaries and barns to make.
"Pull down," he said, "these hovels raised before,
And make more room for my increasing store.
On all we do the flattering moments smile,
And wealth and mirth the hastening hours beguile.
Live then, my soul, enjoy the boundless store,
And in thy triumphs think of nothing more.
Enough is thine to banish every fear,
Though blights and mildews blast the coming year."
These impious words the churl had scarcely said,

*Luke xii. 16–21.

And locked his grain while thousands sighed for
bread,
Ere Heaven in thunder his perdition sealed,
Which thus in frowns Omnipotence revealed:
"Presumptuous fool thy anxious cares deceive,
And Heaven forbids thee one more day to live.
This night the fiends shall seize, not thine, but thee;
Then whose shall all thy boasted treasures be?"

"'Against these mighty ills hence learn to pray,
And for your souls improve the passing day.
The soul through grace requires all your care
To root out vice and plant each virtue there.
And when the utmost of your work is done,
With humble modesty you all must own
That your best actions in this dark abode
Have been productive of no gain to God.
Pride is a rock which fiends of angels made,
A rock where thousands daily are betrayed.
Despise not others, nor yourselves commend,
The best must want a sin-atoning friend.
To bring this truth distinctly to your ears
And hearts, another parable occurs:—

"'Two men who dwelt in Solyma there were,
Who to the temple went one morn to prayer.*
One was a specious Pharisee; and one,
Despised by all, a guilty Publican.
With conscious pride of dignity, the first
Felt no remorse to call the other curs'd.

* Luke xviii. 10–14.

"Begone," he cried, "degenerate and profane,
Nor look to Heaven, for all thy prayers are vain.
Let not thy touch these sacred robes pollute,
Nor dare to tamper with forbidden fruit."
Thus full of pride he to the altar goes,
And speaks to Heaven to tell how much he owes.
"Almighty Lord," he said, "I bless thy name
For such a life as envy can not blame.
I am not, Lord, as other sinners are,
Unjust, or vile, or an extortioner.
By virtue's rules my holy life I squared,
And oft have smiled while guilty wretches feared.
Through deeds of mine not one has groaned or bled,
Nor have my thoughts defiled my neighbor's bed.
I do my duty both to God and man,
And see my contrast in this Publican.
In all my weeks two days are always thine,[1]
Which make thy moments nearly equal mine.
My stores, though large, have lawfully increased,
Nor have I wronged thy temple or thy priest.
Each branch of tithe I righteously bestow,
And pay exactly every debt I owe;
While some, regaling at their sumptuous board,
Defraud thy priests, thy temple, and their Lord,
And in these sacrileges triumph more
Than in those crimes which marked their lives before;
Whereas the herbs which in my garden grow
The various gains which from my labors flow,

[1] The fasts of the Jews were on Mondays and Thursdays, from a tradition among them, as Drusius says, that Moses went up to Mount Sinai on a Monday, and came down on a Thursday.

Withhold their tenth,— that tenth I own is thine,
Nor, ere I pay it, touch the other nine."

"'Thus spoke the Pharisee distinct and clear,
And gazed around in hopes that some might hear;
While in the outer court, the Publican
With faltering voice and downcast eyes began:
"O Thou, whose eyes the souls of men survey,
And view'st their actions in the light of day,
Thou know'st the crimes I tremblingly confess,
And seest the passions which my soul possess.
For all my crimes thy mercy I implore,
And ask thy grace that I may sin no more."
Thus while his tears his penitence expressed,
His hand extended smote upon his breast.
I tell you plainly that the man who mourned,
Pardoned and joyful to his house returned;
While he who felt no consciousness of blame,
Retired in guilt more hardened than he came.'

"Thus spoke our Lord; but that which crowned the whole,
Impressed conviction, and pervades my soul,
Concerned the prodigal, who went abroad,
And left his sire, as sinners leave their God.
Deep in my heart the parable remains,
Its living features still my soul retains;
And were not day well wasted —" "Waste no more."
Gamaliel cries, more earnest than before;
While Nicodemus joins in his request,
And in these words his sentiments expressed:

"Those waste the day, who wickedly employ
Their precious moments in voluptuous joy;—
Who urge the hours which quickly pass away,
And cheat themselves, but think they cheat the day;
Or plunge in vices which we blush to name,
And forfeit Heaven to gain dishonest fame.
But those, like us, who life and friendship taste,
Improve those minutes others only waste,
And calmly view without a blush, and own,
The happy periods when forever gone.
But pray proceed, those parables recite,
Which give instruction and impart delight.
Slip not one thought, one passage, or one word,
Which marks the wisdom of your heavenly Lord.
The mere relation tempts us to adore;
Believe we long to hear of this and more."
Then thus the younger son of Zebedee,
When now he found he should not tedious be:—

"A good old sire there was, whom age and cares*
Had blessed with wealth, and crowned with silver hairs.
Two sons he had, advanced to riper years,
O'er whom he watched with many prayers and tears.
The elder, careful, earned his bread with pain;
The younger, wild, was prodigally vain.
Long had the father seen the last inclined
To lawless pleasures, with a painful mind;
Had kindly spoken with officious dread,
But seen his counsels with new crimes repaid.
He hated work, but if a splendid feast

* Luke xv. 11–32.

Displayed its charms, he was of course a guest.
As vice advanced, and dying virtue fled,
He scorned the life his country kindred led;
And with associates whom his crimes had won,
Fled to the city, and became undone.
In these wild sallies he profusely spent
His own allowance and his father's rent;
And only through mere poverty returned
To view the mansion where his parents mourned.
The good old man on these occasions tries,
With plaintive language and o'erflowing eyes,
Each varied method prudence could invent
To reach his soul and bring him to repent.
With tears of sorrow begged him to depart
From his fast ways, nor break his father's heart.
Hardened in sin, he basely stops his ears,
Or turns his back to laugh at what he hears;
And softly whistling while his father mourned,
To his kind lecture this reply returned:
'If life disturbs my doting father's fear,
Of goods and money let him give my share.
Then far removed, I shall no longer tease
His gloomy quiet and penurious ease,
But hoard my substance, not profusely waste,
With men of fashion, character, and taste.'

"The good old man, whose hopes subdued his fears,
Believed the culprit, and forebore his tears;
He thought the manners and the ways of men
Might bring him back to virtue's paths again;
And thus deluded all his portion gives,

Which the base prodigal with joy receives.
To this the mother, for her darling boy,
Added some gold she scrupled to enjoy;
It long had rusted in her private cell,
And bidden commerce and the world farewell.
With these they mixed their blessings and their tears,
And wished him health to crown his future years.
But these the wretch with hardened disregard
Resolved to spurn, and mocked them while he heard;
Then took his gold, and joined a motley band,
And quickly hastened to a foreign land.

"Thither arrived, rich, profligate, and gay,
Licentious pleasures smiled to court his stay.
His trunks and pockets teemed with loads of gold,
And cringing servants bowed to make him bold.
In masks and balls, in gaming, treats, and plays,
In mirth and wine, he spent his thoughtless days.
Each scene of pleasure he resolved to broach,
Of dissipation, riot, and debauch.
Wit, music, beauty, all that gold could buy,
Combined their powers to cheat him with a lie.
Thus while ambition in his bosom glowed,
He mocked the counsel which his sire bestowed;
And in the process of his mad career
Smiled to review his mother's falling tear:
Despised his brother, who, devoid of taste,
His days with clowns in gloomy languor passed—
These as a contrast to himself he drew,
And vainly fancied his decision true.

"At length those bags which held his glitt'ring store
Were emptied, and could be renewed no more;
And in a moment when he little thought,
His scattered gleanings to an end were brought.
Awakened now to truths he scorned to hear,
He felt his danger and began to fear;
And while he thought on his afflictive state,
A dreadful famine brought impending fate.
In this distress he sought his friends in vain;
New disappointments recompensed his pain.
His old companions no relief afford,
But shut their doors, nor ask him to their board.
One, only one, some gratitude possessed,
And this was less than what his tongue professed.
First at his board he sumptuously regaled,
Nor keenly felt the famine that prevailed;
His host then hurled him from his splendid seat,
And coldly made him with his servants eat;
Then sternly bade him in the forests dine,
And earn his bread by feeding herds of swine.[2]
With these he lives; but worse than these he fares,
For his allowance does not equal theirs.
On crabs and acorns he beheld them fed,

[2] Bochart tells us, out of Donatus, that there were three sorts of shepherds among the ancients: Bubulci, our cowherds, from whence the Bucolics, now a general name for pastoral poetry; the Opiliones, our proper shepherds, the chief subjects of our English pastoral, though I think least of the Greek; and the Caprarii, or goatherds, famous with the Grecians. But of swineherds, there is no mention either in Theocritus or Virgil; though what is greater, grandsire Homer has made Eumæus immortal, who was swineherd to Ulysses. Vid. Odyss. lib. 22.

A state superior to the life he led!
Oppressed by hunger thus, he longed to steal
The husks on which he saw the swine regale;
But though his station was extremely bad,
He feared to lose the servile place he had.
He dreaded justice,—but he dreaded more
To die by hunger on a foreign shore.

"In this condition when his case he found,
Cold, naked, hungry, fainting on the ground,
The voice of pleasure he no longer heard,
And all the horror of his state appeared.
His murdered moments which before him stood,
The slighted counsel of his friends renewed;
They called to mind the gulf which lay between
His present state, and that which once had been.
He mourned that virtue which he once despised,
And cursed that folly which his soul had prized.
His father's lectures, and his mother's tears,
Rushed like a tide, and sounded in his ears;
Till lost in anguish he despairing spoke,
And in these words the dreadful silence broke:—

"'Unhappy wretch, unwary, and unwise,
To quit my parents, and their laws despise!
Too late I think of plenty reigning there,
And die with hunger in complete despair.
O could success but crown my bold desire,
Or gain some morsels from my injured sire!
That bread his servants peaceably enjoy,
Would crown the wish of his abandoned boy.

If here I stay, these eyelids soon must close,
And death but leads to more substantial woes.
To reach his house these tottering feet shall try;
I can but suffer by the way, and die.
But should I live — his eyes, which wake to mourn,
Will stream once more to see his son return.'

"Thus having said, with painful steps he rose,
And by short journeys to his father goes.
His rags and aspect all his wants betray,
And raise him friends to help him by the way.
Of his return at length his father hears,
And strangely smiles amidst a flood of tears;
Then goes to meet him to assuage his woes,
And all the kindness of a father shows.
The happy strangers hastened to embrace,
While different passions reign in either face.
Here soft compassion shed the crystal tear;
But conscious guilt and silent shame were there.
The son, amazed this kind respect to meet,
Low on the earth embraced the father's feet;
And while half fainting on the ground he lay,
These contrite words his tongue was heard to say:
'Insulted father, do not yet disclaim
That long abused, that dear, forgotten name.
If injured Heaven and thou can yet forgive
Those heinous crimes for which my life must grieve,
O do not spurn me with contempt, to roam
A wretched exile from my former home.
To honors lost thy son will not aspire;
But give me bread, and I will serve for hire.

So shall I oft enjoy the longed-for grace,
Even though he frown, to see a father's face.'

"To this the father uttered no reply,
Or only that which started from his eye;
But ordered those who stood in waiting there,
'The festal robes and fatted calf prepare.'
The robes were brought, the richest and the best,
With which his son he hastened to invest;
And the signet from his finger gave,
An honored mark withholden from a slave.[3]
The sumptuous feast was instantly prepared,
And all his friends with joy the banquet shared,
In praise of holiness their hours employ,
And make the penitent partake their joy.
Then, as the Seraphs sung to David's lyre,[4]
Hymns most divine their breasts and tongues inspire.

"Meanwhile the elder of the sons, whose brow
Was clothed with dust, came sweating from the plough.
But much he wondered when the lights appeared;
And when his ears the hymns and music heard,
He asked the cause. A servant thus replies,
While haste and pleasure sparkled in his eyes:
'Thy younger brother, whom as lost we mourned
In distant lands, is to the house returned.

[3] A ring was a mark of liberty with the Romans, and of wealth and honor in the Eastern nations. See Gen. xli. 42 and James ii. 2.

[4] David's psalms were sung in the temple, when angels were present.

This banquet welcomes the repenting guest,
And thou art wanting to complete the feast.
Haste then, my lord, for thee thy kindred stay,
And crown with smiles the labors of the day'.

"Enraged he heard the strange report they spread,
And seemed in looks to wish his brother dead.
The good old man soon learned his discontent,
And from the banquet to appease him went.
Each guest, disturbed, began to quit his seat,
And for the penitent they all intreat.
But fierce and stern he resolutely stayed,
And thus severely to his father said:
'Three times ten years these hands have daily wrought,
And thy estates to full perfection brought.
In thankless toils the prime of life I spent,
And heard thy mandates stupidly content,
Thy calls attended, and thy voice obeyed,
Performed my duty, nor thy rights betrayed;
Yet not a kid to entertain my friends
Could I obtain;—but here my duty ends.
For now thy darling prodigal is come
From stews and brothels, stripped and naked, home.
For him a splendid banquet is prepared,
As though his actions had thy fortunes reared.
Give me my portion, and enjoy thy friends;
For here, I say, the obligation ends.'

"'My dearest son,' the aged sire replies,
'Why glows such anger in thy words and eyes?
Full well thou know'st each branch of my design;

The whole estate, and all I have, is thine.
A few more days, and all thy cares have won
Must quit my hands, and be henceforth thy own.
Why then such murmurs? Why this discontent
At the small portion which thy brother spent?
The bread he eats, he to our bounty owes,
And soon must live on what thy hand bestows.
Come, then, rejoice; for since thy brother's birth
He gave till now no cause for holy mirth.
We thought him dead, but see him now revive;
We thought him lost, but find him yet alive.'
Thus God receives the penitents who come,
And brings to heaven the faithful exiles home.

"One awful narrative shall close the whole,
Whose force I feel impressed on all my soul.
Its features stand engravened on my breast;
Its various scenes are still before me placed,
And time has nothing of their force effaced.
The flames of torment glare before my eyes,
And Heaven expands with joys of paradise.
And as you seem not disinclined to hear,
My tongue shall strive to make them reappear.

"Not far from hence there lived a wealthy lord,*
Who slept on down, and kept a sumptuous board.
His silken limbs were richly covered o'er
With royal purple from the Tyrian shore.
The softest linen, next his tender skin,
Perfumed a load of vanity and sin.

* Luke xvi. 19–31.

Arabia's odors were procured from thence
In nicest order at a vast expense.
Amomum, sacred frankincense, and nard,
Regaled his senses, and their sweets he shared.
The fragrant incense which enriched the air
Declared the land of aromatics there.
At his command his panting servants come,
And costly viands spread along the room.
With choicest fare his polished tables groaned,
And all the dainties of the East they owned.
Those birds on which our ancient fathers fed,
When God vouchsafed to give them angel's bread,
The wretch despised, and scarcely would afford
Room to dishonor his luxurious board.
The beauteous fowls by distant Phasis bred,[5]
Almost as richly as their master fed,
Were doomed the fate the quails had borne to share,
And spurned indignant as unpleasant fare.
Costly and *scarce* a quality conferred,
And in proportion graced his lordship's board;
And could the fancied Phœnix have been caught,
His immense treasures had the dainty bought.

"Within a gallery, on whose edge was placed
Rich tapestry of Babylonian taste,
Sweet music played; and when his servants bring
Another course, they sweep the sounding string,
To lull his conscience, and suspend his cares,
And charm his soul with melting Lydian airs.

---

[5] Pheasants, which still, in some measure, preserve their ancient name.

Anacreon's songs from Greece his flatterers bring,
Which warbling eunuchs, brought from Egypt, sing.
All arts were used his appetites to whet,
To make him lawless, and to quench regret.
Stretched on his couch, reclined at ease he lay,
And meanly sauntered till the close of day;
His chariot then he bade his slaves prepare,
And take him out to breathe the evening air.

"At his broad gate arrived, he casts his eye,
And sees a miserable object lie,
With ulcers covered. Straight with cruel pride
He turned his head and haughty eyes aside;
Then frowning to his crouching servants said,—
'Remove this wretch — this refuse of the dead.
On yonder dunghill let him find a place,
And perish there — I will not hear his case.'
With sportive glee the pampered menials heard,
And for the orders of their lord prepared.
With fainting eyes the victim moved his head,
And full of anguish all his sores displayed;
Then in low accents uttered this reply —
'Permit me here to end my days, and die.
I only ask the refuse of your board,
Those scanty offals which your dogs afford.
This little favor let your hands bestow,
Lest pinching hunger should increase my woe.'
'If,' said the lord, 'the wretch presume to prate,
Cut short his speech, and trail him from the gate.'
Quickly they dragged him over dirt and stones;
But all he uttered were expiring groans.

The hounds sagacious scented his retreat,
And struck with pity seemed to mourn his fate.
By instinct moved, they howled to hear him moan,
And taught the groves to lengthen out his groan.
The angry huntsman heard his dogs complain,
And wound his horn to call them off, in vain;
For while they saw him spurned their master's doors,
They kindly fawned, and gently licked his sores.
This cause of respite which assuaged his pain,
No tongue was near that could, or would explain.
But finding succor in the pangs of death,
He faintly uttered with his parting breath,—
'Requite you, Heaven! I know not what you are;
I go, the glories of my God to share.'
Another sentence to express he tried,
Just moved his lips, then closed his eyes, and died.

"His active spirit from the loathsome clay
Soon took its flight in search of endless day.
Some glorious angels in the clouds appeared,
And to its aid their aerial voyage steered,
Their purple pinions o'er the traveller spread,
And with soft notes their charge to bliss conveyed;
In Abraham's bosom lodged the child of grief,
And to his sorrows gave complete relief.

"The solar beams had nearly left the sky,
And shades were rising to arrest the eye,
When the rich glutton through the evening gloom
Returned in triumph to his splendid home.
Soon as he reached his mansion gates, he heard

The poor sick man was dead, but not interred.
This for some moments filled him with remorse
But sensual pleasure soon repelled its force.
'Then both are eased,' insultingly he cried,
'The wretch had nothing else to do — and died.
But as for me, I gaze without alloy
On future years replete with scenes of joy;
And should the foe of human bliss advance,
And at my vitals point his ebon lance,
The sons of health shall hasten to my aid,
And drive the monster to some poor man's bed.
The time may come, when, far advanced in years,
The scenes of dotage may extract my tears;
When gold and cordials all their joys deny,
And leave me leisure to reflect and die.
But now I shine in life's meridian beams,
And turn my thoughts to more delightful themes.'

"He ceased, and bade his ready slaves prepare
Rich Syrian unguents to perfume his hair;
While other servants with unwearied hands
Prepared a banquet by their lord's commands.
That night he seemed resolved in joys to live,
And taste what wit, and wine, and lust could give.
A few choice friends, like him unkind and great,
Sat round his board to share his splendid treat;
And all the viands which his gold could buy
Pampered the taste, and gratified the eye.
At length the tables of their loads were cleared,
And songs of mirth and ribaldry, were heard.
A golden goblet then before him stood,

Surcharged with wine, which seemed to blush like blood.
On its contents he turned his wanton eye,
And to their healths engaged to drink it dry.
He aimed to taste it, but could do no more—
Both wine and master fell upon the floor.
His friends and servants overturned the board,
And ran to help their half-expiring lord.
Physicians, cordials, they procured in vain,
His beating heart expressed his inward pain.
His pulse grew weak, a rattle clogged his breath;
His face, distorted, showed approaching death.
In this condition he surveyed his state,
And groaned with horror at impending fate;
Then wildly rolling his distracted eyes,
With stern reluctance breathes a sigh, and dies.

"His bloated carcass, of its beauty shorn,
Grown foul and loathsome, could no more be borne.
The putrid mass his friends with state inter
In his superb parental sepulchre;
Then on his tomb the proud escutcheons grew,
Inscribed with virtues which he never knew.
But all the flatteries which his friends could boast,
Affected not his melancholy ghost.
His naked soul by devils, in despair,
Was seized, and hurried through the stormy air;
On him their marks indelible they found,
And firm in adamantine fetters bound.

"Amid the pangs of that distracted state,
Which still for mortals who despise them wait,

Through worlds, in torture, he directs his eyes,
And sees afar the disappearing skies.
The earth to him became pellucid air,
Nor curbed his sight, which traveled here and there.
Beyond this system, a dread gulf appeared,
Where strange confusion was distinctly heard.
Still further on upon its margin stood
The happy mansions of the bless'd and good.
Here glorious Paradise extended round,
And Abraham's presence graced the happy ground.
Here holy spirits reign in boundless light,
Expecting bliss approaching infinite.

"Within the precincts of these realms he spied
The soul of Laz'rus, who had lately died.
Struck with amazement at the painful sight,
His torments pressed with more than usual weight.
Urged by despair, his distant voice he tried,
And thus to Abraham and the beggar cried:
'O father Abraham, most supremely bless'd,
Hear my remote importunate request;
With pity view me in this world of woe,
Expelled from glories I must never know.
I can not share the bliss which you enjoy,
Nor be refined from this impure alloy;
Hence shut from Heaven, and lodged in black despair,
My guilty soul could find no pleasure there.
Yet still one favor I presume to crave,
To ease the torments of this flaming wave.
Since I in tortures must forever dwell,
O give a less intolerable hell.

Is this too much? one moment's respite give
To one whose anguish must forever live.
But if in vain my tongue must plead — nor gain
Some great alleviation of my pain,
Once more to earth the happy Laz'rus send
To act at once the servant and the friend.
One drop of water from his hands I claim
To cool my tongue tormented in this flame.
For in this region from the time I fell,
Thirst joined to guilt, has added hell to hell.'

"'Degenerate son,' the patriarch replies,
Disclosing just aversion in his eyes,
'The day of mercy is forever o'er,
And Abraham, alas, thy sire no more!
There was a period, though it came in vain,
When mercy pleaded, and procured disdain.
Full well thou know'st, ungrateful as thou wast,
In that probation, now forever past,
Thou wouldst nor Providence nor God believe,
Because he suffered such a wretch to live.
Then thou, in wealth and opulence and state,
Bad'st stern defiance to the arm of fate;
While Laz'rus there, afflicted, weak, and poor,
Lived on those alms he begged from door to door.
Now thou and he are in the balance weighed,
And Heaven to both has retribution made.
He lives in joy who lived on earth to mourn;
While thou must feel the rage of flames, and burn.
Besides, these gulfs immensely deep and wide,
Which your sad realms from Paradise divide,

Forbid my foes to hope or friends to fear,
And shut the parties either here or there.
Time is no more. Mutations now are past,
And bliss and torment must forever last.'

"'Unhappy wretch, forbidden to expire,'
He cried, in tears which seemed of liquid fire,
'Too hard I feel the heavy bolts of fate,
But dread hereafter some impending weight.
I feel convinced these woes can never cease;
Ye powers above, forbid them to increase;
O father Abraham! condescend to hear
The last request this tongue shall ever bear!
On earth's vile surface, where I lately died,
I left five brothers full of lust and pride;
And my example and persuasive speech
Make me half guilty of the crimes of each.
When their damnation shall to mine succeed,
And hurl them headlong to this flaming bed,
Each tide of woe which moves the general groan,
Will swell their torture to increase my own.
O grant, great sire, if Laz'rus must not go
To bring me water in this world of woe,
He may at least to their abodes descend,
Awake their souls, and warn them of my end.
For though they mock the sacred truths they hear,
The most abandoned will his voice revere.'

"'Thy last request,' the patriarch replied,
'Small as it is, is urged to be denied.
If thy lewd brethren scorn the laws of God,

Their souls, like thine, must feel his vengeful rod.
To them great Moses and the prophets speak,
And show them plainly what to shun and seek.
But if those truths, which they refuse to hear,
Inspire no virtue, and beget no fear,
They would not learn were thy commands obeyed,
Or yield to one arisen from the dead.'

"He said: the fiends around the prisoner came,
And struggling plunged him in a sea of flame;
While Laz'rus, basking in celestial bliss,
Forgot those sorrows which in time were his,
In songs of triumph poured the notes of praise,
Remote from hunger, sufferings, or disease."

This narrative had scarcely reached its end,
Ere Chuza came, our Saviour's grateful friend.
He with Gamaliel at the paschal feast
Had often sojourned as a welcome guest.
With honest Chuza the centurion came,
Whose faith enrolls him on the lists of fame.
The guests arrived a due obedience made,
And all the parties salutations paid.
But while with friendship these devoirs went round,
Chuza, amazed, the loved apostle found.
With joy he started at each well-known face,
And folded each of them in his embrace.
"I did not hope," he said, "on entering here
To find companions I esteem so dear.
But since I know your unremitting aim
To do his will and spread the Saviour's fame,

Our bold intrusion, I have cause to fear,
Has interrupted what we wish to hear.
Some truths which the Messiah deigned to show,
I know in part, but more I wish to know.
To that great man I owe my greatest debt,
And view my coldness with sincere regret.
I called him man, but on this point demur;
His godlike actions speak him something more.
Around his face mild rays of goodness shine,
His life and laws confess him all divine.
But how humanity can join — or God
Can be located to this mean abode,
Are facts superior wisdom may command,
But such as Chuza can not understand.
Say, happy men, who in his bosom lie,
If aught of this tremendous mystery —
If truths which stand to vulgar ears concealed,
May be with safety by your tongues revealed?
If so, proceed, and while your words unfold,
Our hearts with rapture shall the light behold."

"There are," the son of Zebedee replied,
"Some truths our mission from the crowd must hide,
Till, less obdurate, they are more prepared
To hear those myst'ries which our ears have heard.
But of those truths solicited by you,
Ranked by our Lord among his favorite few,
(Who, though exalted, while you much discern,
From our low converse seem inclined to learn),

---

[6] Jesus spoke in parables for the hardness of their hearts.

My tongue shall speak; and you shall hear detailed
What he in closest privacy revealed.
For while my bosom glows with sacred fire,
I feel his Spirit all my soul inspire."

He said, and paused. His hearers strangely gaze;
His awful grandeur struck them with amaze.
So Truth would look could she a body take,—
So John appeared, and so like Truth he spake.
Greater he seemed, and something more than man,
And thus in strains of eloquence began:—

I.

"Lo, the Eternal Word I sing[1]
Whose great Spirit my breast inspire!
While I touch the sounding string,
Tune, some Angel, tune my lyre!
Rise, my eagle soul, arise!
Mount and gain thy native skies,
And view the eternal Sun with thine ambitious eyes.
(If once direct his glories on me shined,
How gladly would I during life be blind!)
Let thy first bold essay be,
What would employ eternity,
To sing the Father of the world and Thee!
—In the beginning of his endless *now*,
Before this beauteous world was made,

[1] I choose the Pindaric verse here, as being most suitable to the loftiness of the subject; and for my excuse in using it, desire no better than Mr. Cowley's example. For the matter of the ode, it includes, in fact, little more than what is expressed or hinted in the first chapter, and other places of St. John's Gospel.

Or earth's foundations firm were laid,
Before the officious angels round his throne did bow;
He was,—he ever is,—we know not how.
No mean succession his duration knows;[8]
That Spring of Being neither ebbs nor flows;
No point can mortal thought assign
In his interminable line;
Nor our short compass mete the circle all divine.

II.

"What always was, was God, ere time or place;
Endless duration he, and boundless space:
Filled with himself; wherever thought can pierce
He filled, himself alone the universe;
One undivided, and forever one,
Though with him reigns the co-eternal Son,
In his eternal mind conceived,
Not to be argued, but believed.[9]
Down goes my reason if it dare rebel,
As through ambition angels sunk to hell.
Ineffable the way; for who

[8] I am not ignorant that our famous Parker, and the men of new notions, are generally of another mind. But this has not only been the opinion of all antiquity, who thought succession disagreeable to the nature of God, but of the best and most learned of the moderns in our own nation. See the Bishop of Worcester's sermon on the Mysteries of the Christian Faith; Mr. Bentley, and others, and, among the poets, Mr. Cowley: —

Nothing is there to come, and nothing past
But an eternal now does always last.

[9] As to the modus, I mean the manner of the eternal generation; as I explain in the following verse,—ineffable the way, etc.

Th' Almighty to perfection ever knew;
But he himself has said it, and it must be true.
The Father's image He, as great, as bright,
Clothed in the same insufferable light;
More closely joined, more intimately one
With his great Father, than the light and sun.[10]
Equal in goodness, and in might,
True God of God, and Light of Light.
Him with the Father we adore
There is no after or before.[11]
Equal in their existence they have been;
Nor ever did the Son begin;
No room for one short moment, or bold thought between.[12]

III.

"The Father loved the Son; the Spirit came
From their conspiring mutual flame,
From both proceeding, yet with both the same.
Equal to God and the eternal Word,

---

[10] This usually is given as an illustration of the Trinity, and particularly the procession of the Son from the Father; though it must come infinitely short.

[11] That is, all the divine persons were coexistent from all eternity, and do now equally partake of the divine essence and perfections.

[12] The Arians, who had much more to say for their heresy than their modern kindred, did grant, in some of their confessions of faith that the Son was from all eternity, by such an emanation from the Father as that whereby the light proceeds from the sun; but yet contended for a moment's difference between their existence; the Son receiving his, as they think, from the Father; whereby they unavoidably fell into the same absurdity which other pretenders to reason since have done; that, I mean, of a made God, or a subordinate supreme.

The endless Father, the eternal Lord,
With equal reverence be his name adored.
One God supreme, supreme can be but one:
Three more than names, the Spirit, Sire, and Son;[13]
Triad and Monad both, where faith may find
What strikes philosophy and reason blind,
Three great self-conscious persons, one self-conscious mind.
Who made the world is God; and He
Who made all time must needs eternal be.
This by the Spirit did the Son,
The Father's will by both was done,
As was resolved in council by the great Three-One.[14]
High on his throne with dazzling glory crowned,
Sat the All-good, All-wise;
And with his piercing eyes
Surveyed wide fields of nothing round,
Privation's airy realms, and waste profound,
To his loved image reigning by his side,
With equal glory dignified,

---

[13] It was the heresy of Sabellius that the three persons in the Trinity were only three names for one person, as well as one essence. But there seems no need of many arguments to confute it. Names can not act. Names are not distinguished by personal pronouns; one name can not send, or satisfy, or attest another. But there are in the divine essence different agents, different actions being attributed to it; and those who perform them are distinguished by different personal pronouns in the sacred scripture. The Father is said to send, the Son to be sent, the Holy Spirit to witness. Therefore they are more than names, and I think that persons is the plainest word we have whereby to express them.

[14] According to that passage, Gen. 1. 26, "Let us make man in our image."

'Let worlds appear!' he cried:
'Those fair ideas be expressed,
Retained in our Almighty breast.'
Thus far Jehovah said,
And his loved Son his great command obeyed.

IV.

"And first the heavens he built;
Not those above we see,
So gaily decked in glittering bravery,
With Luna's silver waves, and Sol's fierce beauties gilt;
Far more refined, far more removed than they:
Their light would soon absorb the solar ray;
Their light is God's high throne, diffusing endless day.
The angels next he made,[15]
In love and flame arrayed.
The new-born angels cheerfully adore
Their maker and their Lord, unseen before.
Their new-born voice and lyre they try
In sweet celestial poetry,
In lofty hymns, and heavenly harmony.
The refuse of their world did ours compose,

[15] So in Col. i. 16, "By him were all things created in Heaven and earth, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers;" and in the Old Testament, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," when the Son, "the eternal, essential wisdom of God," as the fathers interpret it, laid the foundation of the earth; and if he made the angels, he could not be himself an angel in a proper sense, though he is called by accommodation, or comparison, the Angel of the Covenant; and by Jacob, — the Angel that preserved him from all evil.

Which shines so beautifully bright.
Each scattered spark of heavenly light,
Falling from thence, some sun or planet grows.[16]
But first on the dark void the gentle Spirit descends;
First matter wills, then form the matter lends;
First different somethings makes, then makes those somethings friends.
No longer with wild ferment now they strove,
O'er matter's waves the gentle Spirit did move,
And all around was light, and all around was love.

V.

"After the glorious orbs above were made,
And earth, and sea, and air, were framed,
The Lord with pleasure all his works surveyed,
And man the king of all his works he named.
But ah! how short his reign!
How soon by God who placed him on his throne,
When lawless he and arbitrary grown,
By God, who had the power alone,
Dethroned again!
But God (as much as what is God can grieve)
Mourned for his fate, and fain would save
Both him and that fair world he for his palace gave.
But first he must his justice show,
Before he mercy could bestow;
Then asked, what life would satisfy[17]

[16] Alluding to Galileo's opinion, "That every globe of the universe was created at a distance from the place wherein it was to move, and thence let fall to the place of the designed residence.

[17] This thought has been labored with by some of the greatest geniuses that the world has ever produced. Milton, Dryden, and

His wrath, that Adam might not die?
Archangels trembled; no bright warriors there
To undertake the vast adventure dare,—
Rather all earth and heaven they chose to bear
Than the Creator's wrath. Sad notes they sing;
Each cherub seemed to flag his beauteous wing;
Those gentle spirits signs of pity gave,
And mourned the loss of man they could not save.

VI.

"Then forth th' eternal Son undaunted stood,
(How vast, how infinite his love!
How deeply him did our misfortunes move!)
The dangerous enterprise to prove:
To God to reconcile us by his blood,
He did a body for himself prepare,
To save the world by suffering there;
Not like an angel's, formed of air,
Which when their work on earth is done,
Is the next moment into atoms thrown,
But true and solid like our own;
In all but sin like man. With goodness mild
On his loved Son the Father smiled;
Accepts his offer, and declares
For him the guilty world he spares;
While the hateful fiends below,
Trembling, fear a greater blow;
While the gentle spirits above,
Who mankind protect and love,

---

others; after whom I should scarcely have dared to attempt it, had it not been almost necessary to the subject.

The great Redeemer's glory raise
In lofty notes of godlike praise.

VII.

"'T was he who oft, in human form attired,
Stooped to our world below,
As he our state would better know,
Or company desired.
He often with the patriarchs walked;
With him they ate, with him they talked.
At hospitable Abraham's feast,
He, with two menial angels, was a guest.
'T was he who did the wandering Jacob guide;
'T was he, who, met by Jabbok's side,
That valiant shepherd tried.
'T was he to whom th' expiring father prayed,
When on his grandson's head his hands he laid.
That uncreated Angel he
Whom Moses in the bush did see,
When it with lambent lightning flamed:
What Angel else those titles durst have claimed,
In every sacred page Adonai named?[18]

[18] It is not proper to make a Jew pronounce the name Jehovah, which was, I suppose, long before this esteemed unutterable, for which was used Adonai or Elohim. Now that the angel which went before Israel, and which appeared often to the Patriarchs, was called Jehovah, is plain in twenty instances. See Ex. xxiii. 20. "Behold I send an angel before thee;" and 21, "my name is in him." Now the name by which God revealed himself to Moses and the children of Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt, was Jehovah. Ex. vi. 3. "By my name Jehovah was I not known to them;" and "say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." But God will not give his glory, Isa. xlii. 8,

Him great Isaiah saw, whose lofty vein[19]
Excels bold Pindar's dithyrambic strain.
He saw, and loved, and learned his will
Whose glory did the temple fill,
While holy seraphs waited round,
And Holy! Holy! Holy! sound;
And when with sacred fire they touched his tongue,
Almost as loud as they he thus their Master sung:—

VIII.

"'Sad Israel, weep no more!
Dry those vain tears, those sighs give o'er!
Thy God will thee increase and thee restore!

his incommunicable attributes and essential glory, to any other being; therefore, whoever has his glory must be God; and this God, the Son, whom the Jews tempted in the wilderness, as the apostle says, 1 Cor. x. 9, and of whom all the fathers interpret it; nay, the very Jews themselves do the same, as I find in the notes on Grotius de Verit. Relig. Christian, p. 368, and also from Moses Ben Nachmen, as quoted by Masius; Iste Angelus, etc. "That good angel, if we might speak the very truth, is the Angel the Redeemer, of whom it is written, My name is in him. The angel who said to Jacob, I am the God of Bethel: he of whom it is said, God called to Moses out of the midst of the bush. He is called an Angel, because he governs the world; for it is written, Jehovah brought us out of Egypt. And again, he sent his Angel, and brought us out of Egypt. Again it is written, the Angel of his presence (of his face) saved them, to wit, that Angel who is the presence or face of God; and of whom it is said, my face or presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Lastly, that Angel of whom the prophet says, the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple; the Angel of the covenant whom you desire. Again, the face or presence of God signifies God, as all interpreters agree; but none can understand this, unless he is acquainted with the mysteries of the law."

[19] He is generally reckoned of noble or royal offspring. The glory that he saw in the temple when the seraphim cried, Holy,

He comes, he comes, as grateful as the morn
That follows tedious night! the lovely babe is born —
The lovely babe, in whose auspicious face,
Already opens each majestic grace,
With virtues equal to so vast a care,
And strong the frame of heaven and earth to bear.
    But who, alas! who can proclaim
    All his high titles and his awful name?
    Proclaim his titles far abroad?
Stupendous Wisdom! Omnipresent God!
    Eternal Father! for he's one
    With his eternal Son!
O, Salem's Prince! with speed thy empire gain,
And o'er the peaceful nations ever reign!

IX.

"Though us, who from the world a difference boast,
He with more large effusions does inspire,
Not the poor Gentiles are entirely lost.
Their reason glows with his celestial fire,
His beams than those of Sol more strong and fair,
    Enlightened all, and everywhere.
They light and life at once impart,
Through error's scattering mists like thunder dart,
    Direct the head and warm the heart;
Although, alas! to most they useless prove,
Who close their eyes, and neither see nor love —
Hateful to those who in the twilight stay

Holy, Holy, Isaiah vi, was the glory of our blessed Saviour; for so says this evangelist in his life, John xii. 41. "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him."

When revelation brings the day,
And fain would show to man the heavenly way.
Yet still there were a wiser few,
Who saw, and practiced what they knew,
Devout and pious, chaste and just,
Who did in their unknown Creator trust.
These shall acceptance find where'er they live;
And those who well improve their store,
Kind Heaven will soon indulge with more,
And greater talents give.
That faint, that glimmering light,
Which pierces through the clouds, and shines in spite
Of error's and of vice's night,
If followed closely, will such beams display,
Such orient lustre, so divine a ray,
As shall increase to perfect and eternal day.
This is from God (the argument stands fair),
Who can do all things, and is everywhere—
The Word Divine, though not by his received,
Expected by the fathers, and believed.
In the Messiah all must centred be;
And if, combined, the Baptist, Heaven, and We,
Can aught of faith deserve, our Lord is He."

When John had done, the audience stood amazed,
And, speechless pausing, on each other gazed.
The truths they heard appeared august and high,
And, like their subject, fitted for the sky,—
Sublimely soaring far from nature's rules,—
From Roman eloquence, or Grecian schools.
Yet Greece had something not unlike them drawn,

Though wrapped in shades, by few but Plato known;
These truths the sage from Hebrew fountains drew,
And stood indebted for the light he knew.
Yet ancient writers, and the modern tribe
Of skeptic madmen, to the sage ascribe
Truths most sublime, and many a mystery
Of greater age than either Greece or he:
While solid darkness through the world prevailed,
These brightly shone to Israel's race revealed.
But not to all; the wisest and the best
Perceived their lustre, hidden from the rest.
To these alone his future glories shone,
Who came to make these hidden mysteries known.
Hence all his followers he inspired to soar
Through glorious heights which none had scaled before.
Hence kings and statesmen, as their deeds avow,
Perceive that light they scruple to allow.
Gamaliel now, convinced by what he heard,
Without disguise his sentiments declared:
"From what I hear I must with frankness own,
Much light appears upon his doctrines thrown.
My mind is changed from what it was before,
And does the vileness of the age deplore.
Your Lord, degraded by our rulers' hate,
Is surely worthy of a better fate.
But come what will — may Heaven avert my fear —
You and your friends shall find a welcome here;
And, on occasions, rest yourselves assured
Of all that aid our sanction can afford."

The sun had now those parting beams withdrawn
Which on the summits of the mountain shone.
The company, refreshed, refused to stay,
Warned by the twilight of departing day.
Though warmly pressed, they were resolved to go,
And seek the partners of their toils below.
Their noble patrons now like servants wait,
And with Gamaliel led them to the gate.
Each took his leave, but dropped some tears to part,
And left the others with a heavy heart.
The three disciples to our Lord repaired,
To give details of what they said and heard;
While their protectors silently retired,
To recollect what every heart admired.
Then each well pleased, some bursts of praise expressed,
And full of gratitude retired to rest.

Contents of the Seventh Book

OUR Saviour and his disciples come early to the temple, the music whereof is described, and the several instruments the Jews made use of in their sacred service. The morning anthem. The buyers and sellers in the temple, and our Saviour's driving them thence, pursuing them to Solomon's porch, which is described, with the valley of Kidron, and the precipice between Mount Moriah and Olivet. In the meanwhile his disciples survey the buildings of the temple, the gates, and the courts, the pillars, and the golden vine; and, finding our Saviour, with admiration show them to him. Our Lord then prophesies the destruction of all those stately buildings; describing it more at large, at their desire, as ascending thence and looking back on the city and temple from the mount of Olives; mentioning also the rise of the false Christ, or Antichrist, in the world; and, on their still desiring to know more of these matters, he foreshows the opposition his followers should meet with by the Roman Empire under the ten persecutions; when Constantine, under his banner, should conquer the Heathens, and embrace the Christian religion. After this, on the degeneracy of the Church, Popery arises in the Western world, and Mahometanism in the Eastern; the former of which is followed and checked by the Reformation, and at last both of them destroyed by the power of Christ. He then proceeds to

describe the last great day, and exhorts them to be always ready for it, first by the parables of the Virgins, and of the Lord and his servants; and then by a plain relation of the manner and pomp of the last Judgment, the precise hour not being known. The conflagration of the world. The sentence of the just and unjust, and their eternal bliss or misery. The book concludes with a prayer of the author.

From painting by Hofmann.

CHRIST AND THE RICH RULER

The Life of Christ

BOOK VII

At length the sun with his prolific rays
Relumed the sacred mountain with his blaze.
The temple's roof, which caught his piercing sight,[1]
And seemed to rival his auspicious light,
He saw, and gazed astonished to behold
Reflected light returned from burnished gold;
While frighted shades, in swift disorder, shun
Its bold attempt to emulate the sun.
Thus gloomy night resigned her mournful sway,
And gave her empire to the reign of day

Though soon the sun, his Maker sooner rose,
Forbade by grief to cherish long repose;
To his great Father's temple he repairs,
And spends his wakeful morning hours in prayers.
His chosen twelve accompany their Lord,
Join his devotions, and imbibe his word,
Attend with rapture to the sounds they hear,
And seem in heaven on this terrestrial sphere.
But they, to enter, are compelled to pass
The stately portals of embellished brass;
To move a weight no common strength can bear,

[1] The description that we have left us of this temple is indeed very glorious. Tacitus, in Lib. 5, calls it "a temple of wonderful riches."

Or gain access from those already there.
Here twice ten servants constantly await,[2]
To open wide or closely shut the gate.
On their approach the men within unfold
The pond'rous gate that groaned with heaps of gold;[3]
Apply their shoulders, lift the massy bar,
And move the cumb'rous pile whose grating hinges jar.

The Gentiles' courts, and women's halls they pass,
And the third door of rich Corinthian brass;
To Israel's courts they go, and, prostrate there,
Invoke their God with pious hymns and prayer.
In decent ranks the vested priests begin,[4]
The crowds responsive answer from within;
While music's notes with majesty resound,
From gilded roofs the echoing songs rebound,
And distant Zion-hill protracts the length'ning sound.

---

[2] One of the gates of the temple, as Josephus tells us, was so large that it employed twenty men, every night and morning, to shut and open it. The same gate also, he says, opened prodigiously about midnight, of its own accord, with a great noise, not long before the destruction of Jerusalem.

[3] The gates of the temple were all covered with silver and gold, except one with Corinthian brass, of more value than any of the others. See Josephus.

[4] I think there is no great doubt but this was the manner of the temple-service, there being several of the Psalms which seem to have been sung alternately by the priests and the people. We find Heman and Jeduthun singing an anthem of David's composing, and therein praising the Lord because his mercy endureth forever; to which all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord. 1 Chron. xvi. 36, 41. But the most lively description of the temple-service, which will much illustrate what follows, is that in 2 Chron. v. 11–13. "When the priests were come out of the holy place, also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman,

Thus art and nature in the service join,
And tuneful instruments with life combine:
Harmonious voices swell the sacred note,
While sounds melodious on the ether float.
On *Aijeleth*[5] the concert was begun
To Him who bless'd them with the rising sun.
Next the Creator's praises they recite
On *Alamoth*,[6] in which the chaste delight.
Grave *Jonath*, soft *Mahalah*, mix with these,[7]
And melting *Harps*,[8] which never fail to please.
Cornets and *Trumpets*, which sometimes inspire
Sublimest raptures and true martial fire.
On these they pour in pleasing notes along
Those strains composed for royal David's song:

---

and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. The trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound, to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. They lift up their voices with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."

[5] I here insert most sorts of musical instruments mentioned in David's Psalms, according to the usual interpretation of them. The first is Aijeleth, from the 22d Psalm, which is inscribed, Aijeleth Shahar, generally rendered the Hind of the Morning, a sort of music, as some think, of the nature of our waits, going about in the courts to wake the priests; but it was also, we are sure, from David, used in God's immediate service.

[6] These are thought to be a sort of Virginals, and mentioned in Psalm xlvi.

[7] See Psalm lvi; inscribed Jonath Elem Rechokim, rendered the Dumb Dove in silent places; like Mahalah, afterward, I suppose, a sort of grave music, fit to compose their minds to attention and devotion.

[8] The Sheminith, and all other sorts of stringed instruments.

PSALM CXXXV.

HALLELUJAH!

"Lofty hallelujahs sing
To our own Almighty king;
Him with hearts and voices raise;
Him let all his servants praise.

"Ye who ever stand to bless
Before the shrine of holiness,
In his house, with glory crowned,
Or the sacred courts around;

"Him, the spring of life and light,
Boundless goodness, boundless might,
Him, and his great name, record;
The service is its own reward.

"Ye, O Israel's sons, rejoice,
Your fathers' God's peculiar choice.
Great and high! what idols dare
With the Lord of hosts compare?

"His power no other limits knows
Than what his goodness will impose;
Heaven, earth, and sea, his orders keep,
He closely seals the aged deep.

"See his clouds make black the skies,
Lightnings glare, and storms arise,
And, freed from their imprisoned cave,
Hark! th' impetuous whirlwinds rave.

"See Zoan's fields with blood o'erflowed,
Where he his signs and wonders showed;
Ah! known by their first-born too well;
First they, and then their fathers, fell.

"In vain proud Canaan's kings combine,
Their pigmy arms in vain they join;
To Israel's God they captive stand,
And to his hosts resign their land.

"Still, O God, thou art the same,
Still we sing thy glorious name;
Our glad hymns thy justice raise;
And thy pardoning mercy praise.

"Not so the gods by mortals made,
To whom vain vows and rites are paid;
In vain for their advice they come;
Though mouths they have, they still are dumb;—

"Lifeless eyes, which see no more
Than those stocks who them adore;
Nor their ears the sound can take,
Which their blind devotions make.

"They can not lean their nostrils down,
Nor ask for incense with a frown;
Such are they, and such are those
Who on them their hopes repose.

"Ye, O Israel, who alone
The great God of gods have known;
Ye who guard this holy place,
Mitr'd Aaron's sacred race;

"Ye who from great Levi spring,
His illustrious praises sing;
And every soul that fears his name,
You should also do the same.

"Here let all our voices blend,
Let prayer and praise to Heaven ascend;
To him who doth in Salem dwell,
The Saviour of his Israel.
"Hallelujah."

Meanwhile rich incense feeds the sacred fire,[9]
And clouds of fragrant smoke to heaven aspire.
Next on the brazen altar bleeding lies
A milk-white lamb, the morning sacrifice.[10]
With this the priests the holiest Mincha join,[11]
Composed of flour and beaten oil and wine.
In silence then their private prayers they make,
Then listening crowds the sacred walls forsake,
The Saviour last; but such as still remain,
Transfer their worship to their idol—gain.

[9] This was done twice a day; see Ex. xxx. 7, 8. "Aaron shall burn sweet incense every morning. When Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense." See Joseph. Antiq., lib. 3.

[10] Ex. xxix. 38–41. "This is that which thou shalt offer, two lambs of the first year, day by day. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning," etc.

[11] See Ex. xxix. 40. "A tenth-deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil, and the fourth part of an hin of wine." This Mincha, meat-offering, as we render it, with its drink-offering, is called most holy of all the offerings of the Lord. Bread and wine is the most ancient sacrifice; that which Melchizedek brought forth seems to have been sacred. This is still retained by our Saviour, who was a priest of the same order. See Mede on the Jewish Offerings.

Scarce had they risen, before those worldy cares
Which mixed dissimulation with their prayers,
Disdained restraint, and, spurning all control,
Unveiled the latent purpose of the soul.
The hum of business filled the holy place,
And solemn looks assumed another face.
The sacred temple an exchange was made,
Its shrines were tainted with unholy trade;
Its courts, profaned, appeared a spacious fair,
And pure religion breathed polluted air.
Some in the cloisters gainful shops unfold;[19]
Some spread on tables glittering heaps of gold;
Some, fair-necked doves and murmuring turtles bring,
The poor good-man's accepted offering.
These filled the arches, while the space between
Was closely wedged with droves of beasts and men;
Where the dull ox, delivered from the yoke,
Awaits unconscious the impending stroke;
With stupid ease surveys the bane of life,
The lighted fires and sacrificer's knife;
Of these the largest Bashan's pasture feeds,
Of these the choice that flowery Harmon breeds.
There numerous flocks from Sharon's lovely plain

[19] The three courts of the temple took up considerable room, each of them having cloisters round, and a void space in the middle. In the space were the sheep and oxen; under the cloisters, I suppose, the money-changers and dove-sellers. The roofs of these cloisters, if I understand Josephus aright, served as foundations for those sumptuous galleries round the temple, which Sabinus burnt down in an insurrection of the Jews; for they could not have been on the covered part, since it is not probable that they could have burned the top, and left the bottom standing. Vid. Joseph. Antiq., lib. 7, cap. 12.

Stand bleating by, or drag their pond'rous train;
While spotless lambs the next partition fill,
Driven with more ease from Carmel's fertile hill.
The men, all eager in pursuit of wealth,
Use fraud and falsehood, perfidy and stealth,
Ply every nerve to trace the scent for gain,
Revoke their bargains, cozen, and complain.
All were deceived, or else deceivers, there,
And noise and tumult filled the troubled air.

These scenes the Saviour viewed, with grief oppressed,*
While painful anguish labored in his breast.
O'er all his face the redd'ning blushes rise,
And indignation sparkled from his eyes;[13]
While shame and zeal, which through his bosom roll,[14]
Thus spoke in words the language of his soul:
"Hence, ye profane," indignantly he cries,
"Whose flagrant vices pierce the distant skies;
Hence, sacrilegious wretches, nor disgrace
With impious feet this consecrated place!
This house, where sacred rites have been performed—
By trade polluted, and by crimes transformed—
This house, where God the grateful prayer receives,
Involved in guilt, is made *a den of thieves.*"

Scarce had he uttered these majestic words,
Before his fingers seized the twisted cords;[15]

* Matt. xxi. 12; Mark xi. 15; Luke xix. 45.

[13] St. Jerome says here, *Igneum quicquam ex oculis radiabat, etc.*, there were certain fiery rays came from our Saviour's eyes, which they were not able to endure.

[14] Shame for his countrymen, and not for himself.

[15] We never find our Saviour, in all his history, so indignant as

For reason's voice must always plead in vain
With men who labor in the mines of gain.
His twisted scourge soon swept the house of prayer,
And drove those holy merchants from the fair.
None durst resist; all, murm'ring sneak away,
As sullen spectres flee approaching day.
To the bright eastern gate he then pursued,
Where Kidron's horrid vale beneath is viewed.
Here horror dwells, and here th' astonished sight
Contemplates terror mingled with delight.
Here David's son, with vast expense and care,[16]
First bade the walls ascend the yielding air.
Deep sunk in mines, the laborers wrought in shade;[17]

he is here; except once before, and that on the same occasion; for it is thought he drove these sacrilegious wretches two several times from the temple—nothing, I say, ever made him so indignant as their thus confounding things sacred and profane.

[16] That noble tower, or porch, which, though Herod re-edified, it seems, still retained the name of its first founder, was built by Solomon; and its foundations were laid so deep and firm that the Babylonians could not destroy them, though, no doubt, they ruined the superstructure. If I mistake not, there was the East gate, the Golden gate, the Beautiful gate of the temple, all different names for the same thing. It was built over the vale of Kidron; and from the top of its towers to the bottom of that valley was of such a vast depth, that, Josephus says, it was horrid to look upon, and would almost dazzle the beholders. I wonder how Capellus happened to place this porch of Solomon on the south of the temple, which he does, unless Fuller mistakes him; whereas it is seated in the east by Josephus, and, I think, all others. This gate and the courts about it cost more pains and time than all the temple; Solomon began to bring earth, and level the valley, but it was not finished in several ages. Vid. Joseph., lib. 6.

[17] Josephus says, the foundations of the temple were three hundred cubits deep (sacred cubits we are to understand, in a sacred work, to be twice as long as the vulgar), and in some places more; and that great part of it was built upon the solid rock.

And in vast rocks the strong foundation laid.
Inverted nature saw the fabric raised,
And neighboring nations feared the man they praised;
Piles heaped on piles, the stately arches rise,
And half their summits bury in the skies.
Beneath their shade the friendly Saviour taught,
And helpless mortals felt the cures he wrought;
Disease retired to spread his fame around,
And death and doctors no employment found.

Christ thus engaged, his chosen twelve the while
Surveyed with wonder the stupendous pile,
Its firm foundations laid in solid rock,*
That mocked the thunder's and the earthquake's shock:
The massy gates which the wide porches close,
Tall as the cedars which their leaves compose;
The spacious courts which could some myriads hold;
The glitt'ring pillars, and the vine of gold.[18]
The stones so large, appeared to mock the sense;[19]

---

* Vid. Joseph. de. Bell. Jud.

[18] Josephus reckons above 100 of these pillars all gilded, and describes this golden-vine as one of the most noble sacred ornaments in the world. "It reached," says he, "all along under the chapiters of the pillars, whereon hung bunches of grapes, all of gold, each cluster as long as a man." To which vine our Saviour might allude, when preaching near it.

[19] Josephus, in the account he gives of them, makes them so many cubits long and broad, that we find it difficult to give credit to it. However, it undoubtedly appears from the Word of God that they were very large; for so the apostles to our Saviour, who not only show him in general (Mark xiii. 1, 2) those great buildings, but, in St. Luke, take notice of the stones in a particular manner, "what manner of stones, what goodly stones," etc. And they need to have been firm, when, as Josephus tells us, lib. 7, cap.

Each seemed a mount, and not hewn out from thence.
These blocks, vast ribs of cramping iron chain
So close that all appeared one native vein.
From every quarter miracles arise,
And greet with wonder their astonished eyes.
Thence to the beauteous porch the twelve repair,
And find their loved and holy Master there,
Whom, they, yet full of the prodigious sight,
To view the fabric ardently invite:
"Seest thou these stones, these buildings strong and vast,
Sure these and time coevally will last?"
To whom our Lord, with half-averted eyes,
Predicting ruin, pensively replies:*
"With such vain hopes no more yourselves deceive,
A fate approaches which you scarce believe.
Not one of those proud towers which Heaven invade,
Whose strong foundations in the rocks are laid,
But soon must kiss the dust — not one of those
Prodigious stones which this huge pile compose,
Not one, but, by a force superior borne[20]
From its old seat, from its strong brethren torn,
Must from these walls and firm foundations go,
And sink forever in the vale below."

9, "the Romans were six days battering the east galleries of the temple (with their prodigious rams), but prevailed nothing against them. They then endeavored to dig up the foundations; but could only pull out some of the outer stones with a great deal of fruitless labor." He further tells us that these stones were all fastened to each other by huge clamps of lead and iron; I suppose he means that the iron was soldered to them.

* Matthew 24; Mark xiii; Luke xiii. 34; xvii. 20; xxi. 5.

[20] The Romans did at last prevail, and tore up the very founda-

Struck with these dreadful truths they silent stood;
Fear stopped their speech, and almost froze their blood.
Bold Cephas first revived; and as they went
Their well-known way o'er Olivet's ascent
Through the cool shades for pleasant Bethany,
Presumes to ask when these dread things shall be?
What sure prognostics their approach declare,
And Christ's in glory; that they might prepare?*
What dreadful sights his kingdom should foreshow?
How they the world's and temple's end might know?[21]
Whether these woes should be distinctly hurled,
Or Salem buried in the ruined world?

Our Lord in silence paused, and, looking down,
Surveyed with pity the devoted town.

---

tions of the temple, ploughing the ground whereon it stood, which was performed by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, left these by Titus for that purpose, on the nineteenth day of the month Abib, as says Maimonides; so Eleazar afterward in his speech to the Jews, when he exhorted them to kill themselves: "The temple," says he, "they have razed to the very foundation, and hardly the memory thereof is now left." And Josephus says, even of the city, that "it was beaten quite flat and plain to the ground;" exactly according to our Saviour, "they shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee."

* Matt. xxiv. 3.

[21] They seem to confound them in their question, as if they supposed both should be together. And our Saviour's answer does not, I think, as left recorded by any of the evangelists, *distinctly* separate them. The reason of which might be, to keep them more on their guard. In the following discourse of our Saviour, the reader will see that I have joined several of his prophecies, which we find in different places, expatiating as the subject led me.

Intent he sat, and fixed his laboring mind
On gloomy scenes that crowded close behind;
Till, in a tide of undissembled woe,
Words, tears, and sorrows, thus began to flow: —

"Ah, lost Jerusalem! how much, how oft,
Hast thou my ruin, I thy welfare, sought!
Oft didst my prophets as impostors stone,
And shed their blood who came to save thy own.
Ev'n I the Heir who left my native sky
To bring thee life, must like a felon die.
How oft would I thy wandering flocks have led
To crystal streams, and in rich pastures fed,
To thy base children my protection given
To shield their offspring from the wrath of Heaven!
As heat and strength the royal eagle brings,[22]
And cherishes her young beneath her wings,
So should thy sons have my compassions proved,
The best protected, and the best belov'd.
But mercy's pleas and overtures are o'er,
Exhausted patience can contend no more;
Insulted Heaven that will no longer wait,
Inscribes thy ruin on the rolls of fate.
And you, my chosen few, who firm remain,
No sanguine dreams of pleasure entertain;
Keep clean your lamps, supply them well with oil,
Their light will shortly recompense your toil.
Be ever careful that these lights are clear;
No common darkness seems approaching near.

[22] So it is in Deuteronomy, whence this simile seems to be taken. Our translation indeed renders it *hen;* but the word ὄρνις (*ornis*) will reach the other sense.

In that dread moment, when their woes shall come
To whelm these millions in one common tomb;
Myriads in sin must fall like those who fell
In Noah's dreadful flood, consigned to hell.*
Some on rich carpets are supinely laid,
Luxurious some beneath their vineyard's shade;
Some in the markets toil for gain; and some
Their brides conduct in wanton triumph home.
All mock the prophet, and believe no more
The plague denounced a hundred years before.[23]
Determined Heaven the fatal signal gave,
Convulsed all nature, and the roaring wave
Rides foaming o'er the beach; new rivers flow
In earthquakes borne from frightful gulfs below;
While pitchy clouds a long-continued shower
From Heaven's wide cataracts incessant pour;
O'er towers and hills th' impetuous floods arise,
Sweep the lewd earth, and vindicate the skies.
So sudden shall the Son of Man appear,
The change not less expected there than here.
The stupid world, who heedlessly regard
The threatened wrath, must suffer unprepared;
But you, secure in my protection found,
Shall smile while worlds are perishing around;
From distant realms shall see the flames ascend,
And hail the lightnings which from heaven descend.

---

* Matt. xxiv. 37.

[23] The most natural sense of those words, Gen. vi. 3, "Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years," seems to be that the world should have so much respite before its destruction; which is favored by St. Peter, in his reflection on God's long-suffering at that time. I say a hundred because it is a round number.

"Meanwhile, impostors vilely shall pretend[24]
To bear my name, but meet a fearful end;
Shall raise commotions, and adherents find,
And practice wonders to deceive mankind.
In secret treasons many shall conspire,
And to the lonely wilderness retire
To form their plots, adjust their idle dreams,
Debate their subjects, and mature their schemes.
But these seducers shall in vain assail,
And die neglected like an idle tale.
For my descent shall in the skies appear,
Like day conspicuous, and like lightning clear.
But, first, for all the injuries prepare,
Which malice can inflict or virtue bear.
Hated by all, abused, contemned, betrayed,
My name and title shall your crimes be made.[25]
Dragged to tribunals, hurried up and down,
Their kings shall judge you and their princes frown.
Yet still intrepid face these daring foes,
For I, unseen, will vindicate your cause.
To me commit the care of your defense,
Safe in my power and your own innocence.
This all their pompous rhet'ric shall defeat,
And make them tremble on their judgment-seat;
And greater reason have your foes to fear,
Their elevation proves their fall is near;

---

[24] Josephus tells us of many of these false prophets before the destruction of Jerusalem.

[25] Indeed, their persecutors could find them guilty of no other crimes, and therefore made the very name their accusation. Hence the famous *Christianos ad Leones*, etc., *the Christians to the lions*.

My blood and yours for just revenge will cry;
And theirs must flow, in part to satisfy.

"The Roman armies not long hence shall come,
And blazing torches light them to their doom;
Fierce war, its wasting squadrons scatt'ring wide,
Shall o'er the guilty land triumphant stride;
Death, rapine, murder, shall compose its train,
And proudly trample on the heaps of slain.
Then tribe with tribe shall dreadfully engage,[26]
Excuse the common foe, and save their conqueror's rage.
Those left abroad, from these distractions free,
Unhappy Solyma, shall flock to thee;[27]
To thy proud turrets desolation bear
With all the horrors of domestic war.
The Romans then, with these successes crowned,
Thy three proud walls shall with a fourth surround.[28]
Then, O my friends! for safety urge your flight,
And shun those scenes which must appall the sight.
That moment fly; the next may be too late;
Fly, or prepare for your approaching fate.
Flee those dire walls, let nothing court your stay,
To yon wild mountains press your rapid way.

---

[26] Galilee against Samaria and Judæa, Simon against John, etc. And the very words that Josephus makes Jesus use in his oration to the Idumæans against the Zealots are, "that they rejoiced to see nation against nation."

[27] If the Galilean zealots had not fled to Jerusalem, Josephus thinks it might have been saved. But, alas, Josephus knew not the real cause of its destruction.

[28] The Romans not only cast up a trench, but even built a wall round Jerusalem, to keep in the Jews; after which no more could escape.

Forsake your fields, your houses deem a load,
And drop your garments as you throng the road.

"But first those wild profaners of your law,
Whom favored Daniel's piercing eyes foresaw,
The Holy Place with wicked arms shall seize,
And fill with blood and piles of carcasses.
Then guardian spirits shall their charge resign,
And leave the temple with a dreadful sign;
Leave, with a voice that chills the firmest heart,
A voice that utters — "*Let us hence depart.*"
Scarce can those signals of the sky foreshow
More dreadful plagues than those they feel below.
Though high in heaven a bloody sword shall glare,[29]
A besom of destruction sweep the air,
Horses and chariots armed look ghastly down,
And showers of blood stain all the guilty town;
Though thunders roll, and earthquakes rock the earth,[30]
All big with woes just bursting into birth.
All these, alas! compared with what remains,
Are but beginnings of acuter pains.[31]
Now famine enters on his horrid reign,

---

[29] Vid. Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. 5, cap. 12, where he says, "A comet in the fashion of a fiery sword hung over the city for a year together, before the siege."

[30] Lib. 4, cap. 7. He says, "When the Edomites encamped by the walls of Jerusalem, there arose a terrible tempest of wind, rain, lightning, and thunder, and an earthquake, and several very strange and dreadful voices. Notwithstanding which, their friends within the gates sawed the bars in sunder, and admitted them into the city.

[31] Our Saviour says, "All these are but the beginning of sorrows." And so it will appear to anyone who reads the whole history.

Attended closely by a meagre train;
Expiring groans sound dreadful through each street,
And starving citizens like ghosts shall meet,[28]
With sore amazement from each other fly,
Walk, totter, pause, look round, fall down, and die.
Though now you think a barren womb a curse,
Woe to the mother then, and fruitful nurse.
In those dread days, the parent shall become
Her infant's murderer, coffin, and its tomb.
The famished sons, in pangs of deep despair,
Shall scanty morsels from their fathers tear;
From them the ravening soldier—"Bread," they cry;
And those who gain it, only live to die.
Within, sedition reigns; without, the foe;
Above your towers, above your walls they go;
This after that, each day, resistless win,
And like a deluge pour their myriads in.
But all their conquests which their rage shall find,

---

[28] John and Simon having, in their rage at one another, burnt the city granaries, containing enough to have supplied them for a long time, the famine soon raged among them. Of which Josephus gives many terrible instances, lib. 6, cap., 11, etc. "The seditious," he says, "in this famine, broke up houses for corn and meat; if they found any, they beat persons for denying it; if none, for concealing it; if strong and likely, they killed them, on a presumption that they had some secret stores; if weak, because they would soon die of themselves. Wives snatched the meat from their husbands, children from their parents, mothers from infants; nay, one Miriam boiled and ate her own son. Babes were dashed on the ground by soldiers, when found with meat in their mouths. The young men, pale as ghosts, walked about until they dropped dead in the streets; and some striving to bury others, fell dead over them." And so he goes on with such a dreadful description as shocks humanity to read it.

Are those the plague and famine leave behind.
Yet, ah! too many shall the sword devour,
The greedy sword. These from a half-burnt tower
The bold invaders of their walls defy,
And rush to death because they fear to die;
Mad with despair, leap headlong from the wall,
And hope to kill a Roman by their fall.
Some seek the altar they profaned before,
But find that refuge sacred now no more;
Here spouting blood the slippery pavement dyes,
And gilded roofs resound with human cries.
Swords, grinding swords, shall urge the barbarous war,
And thin those ranks the famine deigns to spare.
Nor shall these woes one gleam of hope afford;
The torch shall follow the devouring sword,
Renew the war, and bid it fiercer rage,
While fiends and men and elements engage,
On death diffuse intolerable light,
And guide his shafts amid the gloom of night.
Thus shall these flames from dome to dome aspire,
And wrap the temple in consuming fire.
This fatal action, by a soldier done,[33]

[33] Josephus says, "After they had been fighting many days about the temple, a certain soldier, contrary to the order of Titus, moved as it were with a certain divine fury, got some of his companions to help him up, and set fire to the temple, by one of the golden windows," which happened on the 10th of August, the same day, he says, that it was burnt formerly by Nebuchadnezzar; the manner and circumstances whereof the historian describes like one who was no unconcerned spectator. He tells us, "Many whose eyes were just closed with famine, got strength to bewail the temple as they saw it burning; and an innumerable multitude being killed about it, and in it, fixed their eyes thereon in the very agonies of death; whose

Shall quickly finish what the war begun;
The sons of Zion heave a general groan,
And help the progress of destruction on,
Hear falling towers, and see those flames ascend
Which must their temple and its glories end.
Thus flames and dying agonies aspire
Midst streams of blood which aim to quench the fire.
Thus falls the city, to the Gentiles given,
A dread memorial of the wrath of Heaven.
Nor shall her sons these ruined walls regain,
Till time has closed their haughty conqueror's reign.[34]

"Meanwhile events, now ripening into birth,
Shall spread my doctrines through the spacious earth.
What passes here, what we have done and said,
By men unborn shall be with raptures read.
To this great task four scribes will I assign,
And watchful Heaven shall dictate every line.
Inscribe their records with sublimest thoughts,
And mark my followers' righteousness and faults.
From this great fountain, all my friends shall draw
Commands and precepts to enforce my law;
Unfold predictions lodged with safety there,

dead bodies rolled down the temple-stairs in streams of blood. All was filled with dismal shrieks and lamentations, echoed by the mountains round the city. The hill of the temple now appeared all on fire, though there was blood enough shed to have quenched it; some of the priests being killed fighting, others leaping voluntarily into the flames, and the rest burnt alive, resolving not to survive the temple." Indeed, through the whole, Josephus has done it so admirably that I am not ashamed to own I can not reach him.

[34] From that of our Saviour till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

And, warm with ardor, bid mankind prepare;
Survey the end for which the earth was made,
And scatter light on death's portentous shade.
Nor will my followers soon a calm enjoy,
Nor shall I soon my enemies destroy.
Triumphant vice in other forms shall rise,
Amaze the world, and emulate the skies.
A rival monster raised, my seat shall claim,
And in the church usurp my throne and name;
Between the seas his hateful palace rear,
And servile kings his pompous train shall bear;
On seven proud mountains shall erect his seat,
And prostrate throngs shall kiss his sinful feet.
Those who refuse to obey this impious See,
Shall find those pains the Jews reserved for me.
By tortures, poisons, inquisitions, fire,
Unnumbered thousands must in groans expire.
Yet these, unvanquished, shall obtain the grace
To join the martyrs of my chosen race.
These, on my coming, shall triumphant rise,
And with the Master reascend the skies;
Shall see the flames on mystic Babel hurled,
And watch the conflagration of the world."

He paused; but having these great truths expressed,
Their speaking eyes continued their request.
He read their hearts, nor for confession sues,
And thus the same important theme pursues:
"The world for faithful souls was chiefly made,
And for the church the fate of states is swayed;
Who guards them, stands; but such as dare oppose,

Shall basely fall before ignoble foes.
For know that Heaven's celestial legions stand,
And wait the signal of their Lord's command.
These o'er the empires of the world preside,
And these the turns of mighty nations guide;
These shall my lambs midst ravening wolves defend,
Protect the righteous, and their cause befriend;
Mark such as treat them with contempt and hate,
And in due time administer their fate.
Then hoary time, descending down the hill,
Shall all the ancient prophecies fulfill.
That wond'rous image, through prophetic light
Which Daniel saw in visions of the night,
Whose iron legs were joined to feet of clay,
Declines apace, and verges to decay.
The mystic stone cut from the mountain's side,
Shall all their schemes of policy divide;
The lifeless trunk and limbs to powder grind,
And lift their ashes to the warring wind.
Another beast, predicted from afar,
Already lives, and wastes the world with war.
Unrivaled fierceness marks the Roman power,
Whose jaws expanded trembling realms devour.
Satan this power will to his side engage,
And you must grapple with their common rage.
What fiends and men, what art and arms can do,
Your sons must meet, but they shall conquer, too.
Ten furious imps of this infernal brood[35]
Shall dye their purple in your guiltless blood.
With tortures, axes, and devouring flame,

[35] Alluding to the ten persecutions.

Wreak all their malice on the Christian name.
To unknown torments give detested birth,
To drive religion from the guilty earth.
But on their crimes impending vengeance waits,
And barb'rous nations shall besiege their gates;
Their tow'ring glories in the dust must fall,
And Cæsar's name be blotted from the ball.

"The first in vice who shall mankind disgrace,
And scourge his country and my holy race,[36]
His mother's womb this impious wretch shall tear,
And sword and fire nor age nor sex shall spare;
In flames and murders his delights shall glow;
He lives detested as his country's foe,
And dies abandoned by that bleeding land,
Which placed the sceptre in his impious hand.
But all the tortures fancy ever drew,
In all their forms shall be reserved for you;
Smeared with asphaltos by this gen'ral foe,
To light the city to behold your woe,
Transformed to torches you in flames must burn,[37]
And leave your ashes in the moving urn.

---

[36] Nero was the wretch who stirred up the first persecution against the Christians, which occasioned that sharp and just remark of Tertullian, "*Non nisi grande aliquod bonum quod à Nerone damnatum.*" "It must needs be some extraordinary good thing if Nero condemned it." This monster was justly voted by the senate a parricide, and an enemy of mankind; and accordingly his memory has been ever detested by all men, except by the Parthians and a few other heathens.

[37] Nero hung up numerous Christians pitched, or otherwise prepared, instead of lamps, and burned them alive in this situation.

But vengeance shall this parricide attend;
His impious hand his wicked life shall end.
The world shall smile at this infernal blow,
And Nero sink to endless flames below.

"He who with Heaven shall next renew the fight,
Shall see his brother give mankind delight;[38]
But view himself abandoned and despised,
By mortals hated, and by devils prized;
Yet this aspiring fiend a god would be,
Composed of falsehood, lust, and blasphemy.
If in his race there aught remain of good,
Jealous, by martyrdom he'll purge his blood;[39]
His wife in exile must resign her fame,
His kindred perish for the Christian name.
Then thou, my *friend*, from distant Asia borne,
Shalt feel his rage, and suffer from his scorn.
Though plunged in flaming oil, thou needst not fear,
The Saviour's arms with succor shall be near;*
Secure in these, thou shalt serenely smile,
When basely banished to a desert isle.†
There will I meet thee, there again relate
The churches' travails, and opposers' fate.
But this proud foe shall from his throne be hurled,

[38] Domitian, who raised the second persecution, was one of the foulest of men (some think worse than Nero); and as much detested as his brother Titus was beloved; who was styled, as all literary men know, "Deliciæ humani generis"—the delight of mankind.

[39] History tells us that he murdered Flavius Clemens, his near kinsman, and banished his wife Flavia, for being Christians.

* Vid. Dan. iii. 25.

† Rev. i. 9–13.

To face the judgment of another world;[40]
His successor shall then our friends release,[41]
And bid mankind enjoy a transient peace.

"But this calm season will unhappy prove;
My friends, grown careless, will withhold their love;
Heretic teachers will assume the pen,
And teach for doctrines the commands of men;
Devour like wolves, and, disregarding God,
Deny the Lord who bought them with his blood.[42]
To bold dominion some will then aspire,
With zeal enkindled at unholy fire;
Replace those spears which Nerva lately broke,
And light that torch which still appears to smoke.
The mystic field will then purgations need,
And these purgations quickly shall succeed.
The storm which comes on this tremendous day,
Shall sift the wheat, but sweep the tares away;
While he who reigns and wields the mighty rod
Of injured Heaven and an avenging God,
Shall hear in death his dying courtiers groan,
And in their fate anticipate his own;
See earthquakes yawn, and, watching the event,[43]
Receive from Heaven this signal to repent.

---

[40] Stabbed by Parthenius and Stephanus. See the celebrated history of this event in Apollonius's life.

[41] Nerva, who by edict, recalled the Christians from banishment; and among the rest St. John; though some would fain have him dead a great many years before, and others that he never died.

[42] Ebion, Cerinthus, and other heretics, who first denied the divinity of our Saviour; against whom St. John wrote his Gospel.

[43] Trajan, who began the third persecution. The dire event here mentioned is that of the earthquake at Antioch; where, the

"Beneath his frown who Trajan shall succeed,
Your sons again in crowds must burn and bleed.
But chiefly Jews, by their false Christ betrayed,[44]
Whose impious vauntings to destruction lead,
Shall from the tyrant feel afflictive pain,
And mourn their cities smoking on the plain.
They die rebellious; you, though guiltless, fall;
Nor shall your blood in vain for vengeance call.
Plagues urged on plagues your enemy shall seize,
Who in despair shall fly to death for ease;
Attempt to soothe his 'fluttering soul' in vain,[45]
Reserved by God to feel acuter pain.
The king of terrors shall elude his grasp,
And mock his anguish to the latest gasp;
That to the world through Adrian may be given
The signal vengeance of insulted Heaven.

"He who succeeds, shall these barbarians tame,[46]
And with true virtue ornament his name;

---

emperor being then present and a vast conflux of people, the earth opened, and devoured an incredible number of men; one of the consuls perishing, and the emperor himself with difficulty escaping.

[44] Adrian, who began the fourth persecution, burnt thousands of the towns of the Jews, for rebelling against him under their false Christ, Barcochab (to whom Rabbi Akiba was a sort of Elias, crying, *Hic est Rex ille Messias — This is that King Messias*); and killed 50,000 men, then re-edifying Jerusalem, etc.

[45] Being sick of a languishing distemper, he would often have killed himself, but was hindered by his friends. A little before his death, he is said to have made those pretty, foolish verses, "Animula, vagula, blandula," etc., to which "fluttering soul" alludes.

[46] Antoninus Pius, who, on Justin's apology, made an edict, that Christians should not be punished, but those who accused them; as Orosius in his history informs us.

The suff'ring empire of your God restore,
And punish those who tortured you before.

"A vain philosopher shall next supply[47]
The vacant throne, and then the just must die,
Till God from Heaven, in answer to their prayer,
Shall give him vict'ry, and his army spare;
Then to my servants he his life shall owe,
And with reluctance tardy peace bestow.
Thus did Elisha three great monarchs save,*
And snatch the armies from one common grave,
Supply their wants in an auspicious night,
And put the myriads of their foes to flight.
This a still fiercer tyrant knows in vain;[48]
Swift moves his fate, nor has he long to reign;
His wicked offspring, barbarous and lewd,
Shall kill each other, and revenge your blood.

"The next a wolf, who, the mild shepherd slain,[49]
By fraud and treason shall the empire gain;

[47] Antoninus Philosophus began the fifth persecution, stirred up by Crescens the Cynic, and continued it with great fury; till being distressed in his war with the Quadi for want of water, and obtaining both that and victory by the prayers of a Christian legion, he ordered it to be stopped.

* 2 Kings iii.

[48] Septimus Severus, who raised the sixth persecution, under whom so many were martyred, that some thought him Antichrist. His two sons, Bassianus and Geta, succeeded him; the elder of whom killed the younger in his mother's arms.

[49] Referring to the seventh persecution under Maximin, who murdered the good emperor Alexander Severus; and was himself killed, together with his son, by his own soldiers at the siege of Aquileia.

Though keen his rage, his time will soon be o'er,
His name and kindred shall be known no more;
His angry soldiers shall the wretch displace,
And ease the world of his inhuman race.

"The next, whom guilt and punishment attend,[50]
Shall sink in war by an untimely end.

"With Heaven and you another will engage,
Vain, cruel, old, and dreadful in his rage.[51]
He for your sons shall racks and stakes prepare,
And raise up gibbets in the yielding air;
Inflict unnumbered torments, and survive
To feel the pangs of being flayed alive.

"These nine fierce waves in vain already gone,
The tenth, united all their force comes on.
Two monsters shall the growing world divide,[52]
And rule with equal cruelty and pride.
Satan inflamed with malice and despair,
Shall range the earth because his fa llis near.
He knows the nations will his gods despise,
And tear his banners, that the cross may rise.
Their vainly thund'ring Jove himself, and all

---

[50] Decius, who raised the eighth persecution, whose son was killed by the Goths, and himself drowned in the fens near the Danube, as he fled from the enemy.

[51] Valerian, the author of the ninth persecution, at the instigation of an Egyptian magician. He was afterward conquered and taken by Sapores, the emperor of Persia, who made use of his back to mount his horse; and when he refused that office, flayed him alive, and covered him with salt.

[52] Diocletian and Maximian.

Their helpless fry of spurious gods, must fall;
And then the conquering stone shall claim the capital.

"When to their doom these tyrants shall repair,[53]
My blessed champion * shall the purple wear;
Then shall those men his throne and honors share,
Whose prayers to Heaven, and arms, had fixed him there.
See him the servants of his God embrace,
And by his royal side in triumph place.
His eyes with transport shall unenvied see
Those glorious scars they wear for truth and me;
Of evils past almost the trace remove,
And bless his people with his pious love.
Thus much of good can one good monarch do,
And peace shall favor those who favor you.
Yet still the signs of ancient fraud remain;
Still shall the lust of empire and of gain
Distract the world, nor yet my destined sway
Relume creation with its genial ray.
Reproach will come, and in my church arise
Base ministers who will my name despise.
But steady vengeance shall the world pursue
And future ills reward the crimes they do.
Fierce Magog's sons shall in the East embrace
A cursed law with Ishmael's wand'ring race;
While all the West a fiercer tyrant spoils,
Diffusing poison through the neighboring isles.
Nay, the unhappy gangrene shall disperse

[53] Diocletian, some say, poisoned himself; Maximian abdicated, but, being caught plotting against Constantine, was hanged for his reward.

* Constantine the Great.

Its dire contagion round the universe.
This Catholic mischief widely will prevail,
And stars that fall display the dragon's tail.
This monster will terrestrial kings dethrone*
And, leagued with devils, reign supreme alone;
The God of Heaven with blasphemies oppose,
Defy his power and abrogate his laws;
And he who does arraign these cursed deeds,
Dies by the ax, or at the fagot bleeds.
But first, what *lets* must be removed away,[54]
Rome's stately glories must in dust decay;
Then shall this name of blasphemies arise,
And hurl defiance to the distant skies;
Flatt'ry and murder shall his title gain,
And arts and arms that title shall maintain.
He, though debauched, shall abstinence enjoin,
And basely aim to frustrate God's design;
Marriage with him shall criminal be grown,
While lusts of Sodom shall be all his own.
Long shall he reign; but when he sits on high,
Sits most secure of fate, his fall is nigh.†
Meanwhile a swan in Gomer's fields will rise,[55]
Who shall his laws, as he does mine, despise.
Repenting kings shall then abhor the whore,**

---

* Rev. xii. 4.

[54] This the ancient Christians interpreted of the Roman Empire. See 2 Thess. ii. 7.

† Rev. xviii. 7, 8.

[55] It is said in the history of John Huss, that at his martyrdom he prophesied of a swan which should rise a hundred years after, whom the Papists should not be able to burn.

** Rev. xvii. 16.

And spurn indignant what they loved before.
Then shall this power contemptible be made,
And shame impel its vices to the shade;
My sword full drawn shall give new epochs birth,
My thunder drive corruption from the earth.
Then shall the just their promised kingdom gain,
And then the saints of the Most High shall reign. *

"If more you ask,—the day, the hour precise,
When I appear? my Father this denies.
The mystery from angels is concealed,
Nor to the Son himself as man revealed; †
Since, if remote, it might relax your care;
If near, might sink you into deep despair.
Your constant duty is to watch and pray,
And thus prepare against the judgment day.

"Come, learn a parable—Ten virgins fair **
Together lived, no matter when or where!
One half were prudent, armed against surprise.
The other five were rather fair than wise.
A princely bridegroom did these ten invite
To grace his partner on their nuptial night.
With secret transport every bosom glowed
To seize the honors which the prince bestowed.
To quit their dwellings all with speed prepare,
And take their lamps to greet the blushing fair.
Five, with their lamps, took purest oil in store;
Five basked in day, and thought of nothing more;

* Dan. vii. 18.
† Mark. xiii. 32.
** Matt. xxv. 1–13.

All, thus equipped, proceed with one design,
The grand procession of their prince to join.
They travelled long, but saw no bridegroom near
Nor any news of his approach could hear.
Night hastened on, and fogs began to rise,
And dews descended from the fading skies;
The gath'ring clouds unwholesome vapors showed,
And darkness covered their intended road.
To shun these ills the virgin guests repair
To a friend's mansion which they knew was near.[56]
It joined the margin of that public road
Their friends must tread, and they had lately trod.
On entering here, to cheat the tardy hours,
Each spreads her store of intellectual powers,
Descants on holiness, its laws explains,
Or marks those actions which must end in pains.

"The trembling moon had measured half the skies,
And sleep had seized and sealed their weary eyes;
Their careless limbs were on the couches laid,
When through the midnight air a cry was made—
'*The bridegroom comes!*' Dull night repeats the sound,
And frighted sleep unlocked the sense he drowned.
Not quite awake, the virgins quit their bed;
All trim their lamps, and midnight darkness fled;

[56] Some such thing seems implied from the economy of the parable. For it is said in the first verse, they actually "went forth to meet the bridegroom." But verse 5, "while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept;" which they can not be supposed to have done in the open air. But the reader must spiritualize the whole.

From painting by Plockhorst.

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN

Those fed with oil diffused a flood of light,
And shot new day across the gloom of night.
Nor light nor oil in theirs the others find,
Extinguished fire had left a cloud behind;
Recruits for both they from the wise entreat,
But asked a favor that appeared too great.
These to the merchants sent them, there to buy
For all their wants an adequate supply;
Then joined the train which moved in solemn state,
And found a welcome at the bridegroom's gate.

"Meanwhile, the others who in darkness strayed,
Found with regret their quick return delayed.
In vain they wandered in pursuit of shops,
For disappointment murdered all their hopes.
At length resolved, they to the feast repair
To join the guests in darkness as they were;
The gates were shut as they approached the street,
And naught but dangers and affronts they meet.
Clam'rous and loud, when shut the gates they found,
With knocks and calls they make the walls resound;
Till from his seat, disturbed, the bridegroom rose,
And to the sounding gates in anger goes,
Sternly demanding what unwelcome guest
At this ill hour intruded on the feast?
Forward and bold, they answer, 'Lord, they're we,
By thee invited, and well-known to thee.
Prepared and ready at thy gate we stand,
And ask admittance, but in vain demand.
But since our friend, our lord, our prince is here,
We can no longer an admission fear.'

The lord rejoins, 'The time for that is o'er;
And gone forever, will return no more;
Your names henceforth must be unknown to me,
And utter darkness must your portion be.'
Learn hence this moral — Watch, and be prepared;
Your devious paths let circumspection guard;
For in an hour no human wisdom knows,
The trump of God shall banish your repose;
And, if abandoned to unclean desire,
The Judge will doom you to eternal fire."

Pleased with the things their gracious Saviour said,
Their speaking gestures urged him to proceed.
He marked the latent strugglings of their breast,
And thus indulged their wishes unexpressed: —

"A lord there was whose business called him far*
From his abode, for commerce, peace, or war,
No matter which,—but his estate was large,
Which he committed to his servants' charge.
Their various turns for merchandise he knew,
And estimated what they all could do.
To one five talents to improve he gives;
Another two, another one receives.
Soon as their lord had this division made,
He took his leave and left them to their trade.
He who had five, did other five obtain;
And he with two received proportioned gain.
He who had one, received that one for naught;
For to obey his lord, he never sought.

* Matt. xxv. 14–20.

Instead of trading to increase his hoard,
He hid the talent of his absent lord;
Then freed from care, for sloth alone would please,
He basely slumbered in inglorious ease.

"Soon as their lord returned from foreign lands,
He from his servants their accounts demands.
The two, with joy, their righteous master meet,
And humbly lay their profits at his feet.
Well pleased, he views them with a kind regard,
And smiles on each, and gives a great reward.
With conscious guilt that marked his sullen face,
The third, approaching with an awkward grace,
Upbraids his master in a wicked strain,
As proud, rapacious, insolent, and vain.
'I knew my master, long before he went,
A hard exacter of the sums he lent,
Severe and cruel, that, from others' pains
Expected large and disproportioned gains.
How could I then propose myself to save,
If trade had robbed me of the sums he gave?
With these distracting thoughts I struggling lay,
But fixed at last, and took the safest way.
His talent I intrusted to the ground,
And there the same may be in specie found.
I have no int'rest, but present him all,
Each mite, each farthing, of the principal.'

"To him his lord, whose eyes with anger burn,
In terms of justice made this quick return:
'Ungrateful servant! by thy crimes betrayed,

The lord rejoins, 'The time for that is o'er;
And gone forever, will return no more;
Your names henceforth must be unknown to me,
And utter darkness must your portion be.'
Learn hence this moral — Watch, and be prepared;
Your devious paths let circumspection guard;
For in an hour no human wisdom knows,
The trump of God shall banish your repose;
And, if abandoned to unclean desire,
The Judge will doom you to eternal fire."

Pleased with the things their gracious Saviour said,
Their speaking gestures urged him to proceed.
He marked the latent strugglings of their breast,
And thus indulged their wishes unexpressed: —

"A lord there was whose business called him far*
From his abode, for commerce, peace, or war,
No matter which,—but his estate was large,
Which he committed to his servants' charge.
Their various turns for merchandise he knew,
And estimated what they all could do.
To one five talents to improve he gives;
Another two, another one receives.
Soon as their lord had this division made,
He took his leave and left them to their trade.
He who had five, did other five obtain;
And he with two received proportioned gain.
He who had one, received that one for naught;
For to obey his lord, he never sought.

* Matt. xxv. 14–20.

Instead of trading to increase his hoard,
He hid the talent of his absent lord;
Then freed from care, for sloth alone would please,
He basely slumbered in inglorious ease.

"Soon as their lord returned from foreign lands,
He from his servants their accounts demands.
The two, with joy, their righteous master meet,
And humbly lay their profits at his feet.
Well pleased, he views them with a kind regard,
And smiles on each, and gives a great reward.
With conscious guilt that marked his sullen face,
The third, approaching with an awkward grace,
Upbraids his master in a wicked strain,
As proud, rapacious, insolent, and vain.
'I knew my master, long before he went,
A hard exacter of the sums he lent,
Severe and cruel, that, from others' pains
Expected large and disproportioned gains.
How could I then propose myself to save,
If trade had robbed me of the sums he gave?
With these distracting thoughts I struggling lay,
But fixed at last, and took the safest way.
His talent I intrusted to the ground,
And there the same may be in specie found.
I have no int'rest, but present him all,
Each mite, each farthing, of the principal.'

"To him his lord, whose eyes with anger burn,
In terms of justice made this quick return:
'Ungrateful servant! by thy crimes betrayed,

The lord rejoins, 'The time for that is o'er;
And gone forever, will return no more;
Your names henceforth must be unknown to me,
And utter darkness must your portion be.'
Learn hence this moral — Watch, and be prepared;
Your devious paths let circumspection guard;
For in an hour no human wisdom knows,
The trump of God shall banish your repose;
And, if abandoned to unclean desire,
The Judge will doom you to eternal fire."

Pleased with the things their gracious Saviour said,
Their speaking gestures urged him to proceed.
He marked the latent strugglings of their breast,
And thus indulged their wishes unexpressed: —

"A lord there was whose business called him far*
From his abode, for commerce, peace, or war,
No matter which,—but his estate was large,
Which he committed to his servants' charge.
Their various turns for merchandise he knew,
And estimated what they all could do.
To one five talents to improve he gives;
Another two, another one receives.
Soon as their lord had this division made,
He took his leave and left them to their trade.
He who had five, did other five obtain;
And he with two received proportioned gain.
He who had one, received that one for naught;
For to obey his lord, he never sought.

* Matt. xxv. 14–20.

Instead of trading to increase his hoard,
He hid the talent of his absent lord;
Then freed from care, for sloth alone would please,
He basely slumbered in inglorious ease.

"Soon as their lord returned from foreign lands,
He from his servants their accounts demands.
The two, with joy, their righteous master meet,
And humbly lay their profits at his feet.
Well pleased, he views them with a kind regard,
And smiles on each, and gives a great reward.
With conscious guilt that marked his sullen face,
The third, approaching with an awkward grace,
Upbraids his master in a wicked strain,
As proud, rapacious, insolent, and vain.
'I knew my master, long before he went,
A hard exacter of the sums he lent,
Severe and cruel, that, from others' pains
Expected large and disproportioned gains.
How could I then propose myself to save,
If trade had robbed me of the sums he gave?
With these distracting thoughts I struggling lay,
But fixed at last, and took the safest way.
His talent I intrusted to the ground,
And there the same may be in specie found.
I have no int'rest, but present him all,
Each mite, each farthing, of the principal.'

"To him his lord, whose eyes with anger burn,
In terms of justice made this quick return:
'Ungrateful servant! by thy crimes betrayed,

The lord rejoins, 'The time for that is o'er;
And gone forever, will return no more;
Your names henceforth must be unknown to me,
And utter darkness must your portion be.'
Learn hence this moral — Watch, and be prepared;
Your devious paths let circumspection guard;
For in an hour no human wisdom knows,
The trump of God shall banish your repose;
And, if abandoned to unclean desire,
The Judge will doom you to eternal fire."

Pleased with the things their gracious Saviour said,
Their speaking gestures urged him to proceed.
He marked the latent strugglings of their breast,
And thus indulged their wishes unexpressed: —

"A lord there was whose business called him far*
From his abode, for commerce, peace, or war,
No matter which,—but his estate was large,
Which he committed to his servants' charge.
Their various turns for merchandise he knew,
And estimated what they all could do.
To one five talents to improve he gives;
Another two, another one receives.
Soon as their lord had this division made,
He took his leave and left them to their trade.
He who had five, did other five obtain;
And he with two received proportioned gain.
He who had one, received that one for naught;
For to obey his lord, he never sought.

* Matt. xxv. 14–20.

Instead of trading to increase his hoard,
He hid the talent of his absent lord;
Then freed from care, for sloth alone would please,
He basely slumbered in inglorious ease.

"Soon as their lord returned from foreign lands,
He from his servants their accounts demands.
The two, with joy, their righteous master meet,
And humbly lay their profits at his feet.
Well pleased, he views them with a kind regard,
And smiles on each, and gives a great reward.
With conscious guilt that marked his sullen face,
The third, approaching with an awkward grace,
Upbraids his master in a wicked strain,
As proud, rapacious, insolent, and vain.
'I knew my master, long before he went,
A hard exacter of the sums he lent,
Severe and cruel, that, from others' pains
Expected large and disproportioned gains.
How could I then propose myself to save,
If trade had robbed me of the sums he gave?
With these distracting thoughts I struggling lay,
But fixed at last, and took the safest way.
His talent I intrusted to the ground,
And there the same may be in specie found.
I have no int'rest, but present him all,
Each mite, each farthing, of the principal.'

"To him his lord, whose eyes with anger burn,
In terms of justice made this quick return:
'Ungrateful servant! by thy crimes betrayed,

To truth a stranger, and to justice dead;
If from the toils of others I require
The gains of trade, it is a just desire.
To prove this truth, behold these facts combine,
The harvest, reapers, and the field are mine.
Nor are these deeds rapacious or severe,
My ways unequal, or my mind austere;
I broke the glebe, the teeming furrow ploughed,
Reap where I sowed, and gather what I strowed;
Gave to my servants property to trade,
And only ask what they received and made.
I do no more; thy own attesting heart
Shall to these truths its evidence impart.
If these be crimes, then civil life must fail,
And desolating anarchy prevail.
Know then, vile wretch, who durst arraign thy lord,
He draws thy sentence from thy lips and word.
For were he such as thou wouldst represent,
Exacting more than he advanced or lent,
He would expect, returning from afar,
The utmost int'rest that his wealth would bear;
And punish him, too indolent to toil,
Who hid his talent in the lifeless soil.
Thy riches therefore are of right conveyed
To him who five to twice five talents made;—
As to thyself, my servants thee this night
Shall, like thy talent, hide from cheering light;
Thou shalt in dungeons bound, and fettered there,
Forever mourn in darkness and despair.'

"But if these truths, you, more distinct and clear,
Without a parable desire to hear,

Attend while I these dreadful scenes display,
And paint the progress of the judgment day.

"Know then, my friends, a dreadful day will come
To light all nature to her flaming tomb;
Though wrapped in secret from all finite eyes,
In God's arcana all its horrors rise.
Before it comes, some signals shall appear,
And certain signs prognosticate it near.
My great archangel, clad in armor bright,*
Shall sound his trumpet, and the world affright.
The piercing call so terribly shall sound,
Through trembling nature's universal ground,
That earth convulsed, and the dissolving sky,
Shall mourn their fate, and lay them down to die.
But deathless man, whose millions shall survive,
Must quit his grave, in joy or pain to live.
From mold'ring coffins every slumb'ring guest
Shall leave forever his abode of rest;
The clust'ring atoms, which an age before
Floated in air, or waves, or pressed the shore,
From their strange mansions shall embodied rise,
And move through flames which bury earth and skies.
But ah! how diff'rent will the race appear,
From what they seem when we survey them here!
The just shall smile, and, clothed in glory, shine;
The guilty shriek, and sink from wrath divine.

"That radiant orb, whose webs of light disperse
Their golden fibres through the universe,
Loose from his centre must unbalanced roll,
And by his fall unhinge the steady pole;

* 1 Thess. iv. 16.

Refund that light which now dispenses day,
Or gently melt in fiercer fires away.
Ten thousand suns must join in his disgrace,
Or wander lawless through th' abyss of space.
The lunar sphere, congealed to seas of blood,
Shall dreadful ruin on the world obtrude;
Heaps piled on heaps, orbs shall on orbs be hurled,
Chaos with chaos mixed, and world with world.
If then the whole be not from doom secure,
What dreadful ravage must this part endure!
As when the deluge covered every shore,
And formed that chaos earth had felt before,
When heaven and earth did both their oceans join,
And with the fountains of the deep combine,
Made heaving waves in liquid mountains come,
And seas boil up from her hydropic womb.
So from the sources whence that deluge came,
Oceans of fire shall teem with waves of flame.
Thus by God's vengeance cursèd Sodom fell,
Thus burns creation a terraqueous hell.
From earth's wide womb large floods of flame shall flow,
And fires above unite with those below.
Thence all the righteous, when prepared for flight,
Shall safely soar to worlds of calmer light.
While those polluted with unpardoned sin,
Must writhe in groans, and all their woes begin.
But first that sentence they deserve so well
Must fix their station, and describe their hell;
And when the fiat of the Judge is passed,
Their raging torments must forever last.

"High in the midst shall my tribunal stand,
With seers, apostles, saints on my right hand.
Martyrs and confessors, the glorious train
Who suffer here, shall with their Saviour reign.
While on the left a dismal gloomy band
Of haughty tyrants and their flatt'rers stand;
Unfeeling misers, liars, and profane,
And those whose swords have filled the world with slain;
Lewd priests, apostate poets who disgrace
Their high descent, and stain their heaven-born race;
Lean hypocrites, who, with deceitful prayer,
Obtain damnation with unwearied care:
But know there will not be an atheist there.

"Arranged in order, and distinctly seen,
To you, with smiles, your Saviour will begin:
'Come, by my Father most supremely bless'd;
Come, holy souls, to endless peace and rest.
For some short years of misery and pain,
In light and joy begin an endless reign,
In that bless'd place before all worlds prepared
By heavenly skill, by hands Almighty reared.
You in that world yourselves have faithful shown,
And those who owned me there, I here will own;
You saw me hungry, and you then relieved;
And, parched with thirst, your favors I received;
You saw me wand'ring, and you entertained,
Nor was my naked poverty disdained;
Sick, and imprisoned, you caressed your friend,
And to my wants did your assistance lend.'

"With modest joy the righteous will reply,
While grateful tears will start in every eye:
'Thy merits, Lord, not virtues of our own,
Must place thy servants on thy radiant throne.
Unnumbered failings marked our ways below,
But deeds like these remembrance can not show.
When was our Lord with food or drink relieved?
Or when was clothing from our hands received?
When did we see thee struggling with disease,
Or from the fetters of the jail release?'
To this your Judge and Saviour will rejoin,
'Those generous favors I accounted mine,
Which on my suffering members were bestowed
From ardent zeal for your insulted God.
These deeds the annals of these realms record;
Go then, and reign with your triumphant Lord.'

"Then turning to the guilty crowds who wait
Their too well-known intolerable fate,
While justice frowns on that tremendous brow
Which melts in tears, or smiles in mercy *now*,
And kindly offers to remit their sins,
With solemn aspect thus the Judge begins:
'Go, ye accurs'd, to endless torments go,
And writhe in groans in endless worlds of woe;
In fires prepared when rebel angels fell;
You shared their crimes, and must partake their hell.
By you, unkindness in the world was shown;
You there disowned me, here I you disown;
My hunger there neglected to relieve,
Nor did you even a cup of water give.

You saw me wand'ring, and expressed disdain,
Scorned my condition, and despised my pain;
With stripes you clothed me, scorned my plaintive tale,
Gave stones for bread, and lodged me in a jail.'

"With all the haste of impudent despair
These sons of vice will ask me, 'When and where?'
To them my answer, like the last, shall be,
'The wrongs my servants felt, I view as done to me.'

"A place there is from heavenly light debarred,
Where dismal shrieks of guilty souls are heard;
Loud yells, deep groans, thick stripes, long clanks of chains,
Where solid everlasting darkness reigns;
Where raging fire that on the wretched feeds,
No new supplies of sulphurous matter needs;
Where hope refuses her consoling ray,
And change of torment measures night and day.
Hither the damned, with fallen angels driven,
Shall quit the precincts, and be shut from heaven.
Tormentors and tormented, deep they fall,
And, from the ruins of this burning ball,
By storms of flame on waves of sulphur tossed,
In that tremendous gulf shall be forever lost.

"Then shall the righteous with their Lord ascend
To worlds of glory which exclude an end.
Know then, this place is far removed away
From yonder lamp which makes this mortal day;
This blissful place unknown to clouds of night,

Sustains his throne who scatters endless light.
There angels live; and saints so far refined,
Shall feel their bodies glorious as their mind.
There genuine friendship, by the world professed,
Shall be matured, acknowledged, and possessed;
Glow into raptures, fill the soul with bliss,
And swell the tide of finite happiness;
Employ their tongues, their mental powers improve,
To speak with transports of the God they love.
Here they shall dwell, and constantly enjoy
Consummate glory, free from all alloy,
In seats of bliss unutterable placed,
And be forever by their God embraced."

Here, as the Saviour ended his discourse,
The twelve sat mute, reflecting on its force.
The joys of heaven, the torments of the damned,
Which the Redeemer had described and named,
Revived their spirits, but alarmed their fear,
With bliss and sufferings both remote and near.
The latent pangs which labored in their breast,
When worlds unseen stood visibly expressed,
The inward conflict of their souls unveils
With such emotions as the writer feels.

O grant, just Heaven, when time shall cease to last,
And future worlds shall retrospect the past,
Grant, that thy servant may approach that shore
Where pain and anguish shall be felt no more.
In that dread moment, when the darts of death
Shall change these scenes, and stop this fleeting breath,

The Life of Christ

Oh! may his spirit, previously prepared,
Exult with joy to meet its great reward;
Forsake the shadows at the signal given,
And mount triumphant to the gates of heaven.
And when that trumpet which the guilty dread,
Shall wake to life the millions of the dead,
Refined for glory may his body rise,
To swell that throng which shall ascend the skies.

Contents of the Eighth Book

A CATALOGUE of the nations that came to the passover, together with the inhabitants of the Holy Land. Our Saviour privately comes thither with his disciples, sending St. Peter and St. John before him, to prepare the passover; but could not remain undiscovered, some Greeks from Athens having heard of his fame, and pressing to see him; which having obtained by the assistance of some Tyrian merchants of Philip's acquaintance, God the Father, at Christ's desire, attests him now the third time by a voice from Heaven; at which the people being again ready to force a kingdom upon him, he retires with his disciples. However, his fame and doctrine spread so far that all things were now at a crisis, and the whole nation was upon the point of owning him the Messiah. At which Lucifer, being alarmed, takes with him a detachment of devils, and flies to earth; where, sending the rest to their appointed posts, to facilitate his design, he himself enters the palace of Caiaphas; and night being now come, and the high priest asleep, appears before him in the form of old Hircanus, chiding him for his remissness, and stirring him up to destroy our Saviour. In order to which, as soon as he awakes, Caiaphas sends privately to assemble the Sanhedrim; which being known to Gamaliel, Joseph, and Nicodemus, they hasten thither likewise. Caiaphas's speech at the Sanhedrim against our Saviour, accusing him as a subverter of their laws; pretending to prove that

he was not, for that reason, to be hearkened unto, though he wrought miracles; complaining of the meanness of his doctrine on one side, obliging to forgive enemies, and of the impracticable heights on the other, not admitting liberty of thoughts, or the first motions of desire or anger; with other objections usually urged by the deists against Christianity. After which he rises higher, and charges him with blasphemy; and at last, entering into the prophetic spirit, he declares it was necessary that one man should die for the whole nation; urging that that could not be a sin which God himself had decreed. His speech variously received by the Sanhedrim. Nicodemus stands up, and begins cautiously to answer him; when Joseph of Arimathea, interrupts, and boldly, before them all, confesses Jesus; distinctly answering all the cavils of Caiaphas against his person and laws, and pressing the Sanhedrim to receive him as their true Messiah. While they were divided in their opinions, and debating the matter, our Saviour celebrates the passover with his twelve disciples, and institutes the sacrament of his last supper, foreshowing and describing the traitor Judas, who went out from the rest with a resolution to betray him; whose offer to the Sanhedrim was agreed to by the majority, and preparations made to apprehend Jesus. Our Lord comforts the remaining disciples, but prophesies of their forsaking him, and particularly Peter's denial. Thence he leads them to Gethsemane; and takes Peter, James, and John with him into the thickest part of the garden, leaving the rest at the gate. His agonies and prayers, not for fear of the approaching pain or infamy, but of his Father's anger. An angel appears to strengthen him.

Contents of the Eighth Book

A comparison of him with the most famous ancient heroes, showing how far he exceeded them in patience and virtue. The three disciples asleep for sorrow. Judas, having received guards from the high priest, comes to the garden and, with a kiss, betrays our Lord; who being apprehended, after he had healed Malchus, whom Peter had wounded; all his disciples forsake him. He is carried to the high priest's palace, and there abused by the guards and rabble. John, who soon resumed courage, followed our Saviour, and owned himself his disciple. Peter comes after, though with more fear; but being known to some of the company, and charged as a follower of Jesus, he thrice denies him, the last time with curses and imprecations; till, on our Saviour's looking back upon him, he returns to himself, and, departing from the palace, most deeply repents. Our Saviour is accused by Caiaphas; but no proof is brought against him that would reach his life; till Caiaphas adjuring him to confess if he were the Son of God, and our Lord telling them they should hereafter see him come to judge the world; he is accused of blasphemy and hurried away to the Roman governor, being adjudged by the Sanhedrim worthy of death.

From painting by Dietrich.

CHRIST THE CONSOLER

The Life of Christ

BOOK VIII

The Paschal morn arrived, with solemn awe,
From Salem's towers the sacred trumpets blow,[1]
Their feast announcing; and all Israel meet
In numerous crowds through every gate and street,
Strangers and proselytes where'er their birth,
From various regions of the spacious earth.
Some from the isles, Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus; some
From Phrygia, Lybia, and Pamphylia come;
From the fair fields with rivers circled wide,[2]
From Elam and Euphrates' flowery side.
Arabia's converts to the feast repair,
And Monobaze saw Helen's subjects there.[3]
From Adiabene some well known to fame;
But most from blest Judea's regions came;
From Dan to old Beersheba's fruitful plain,
From Jazer's sea to the great western main.
These from Phenician fields their journey take,

[1] Josephus says, the priests were used to give warning by the sound of a trumpet from the towers of the temple, against any approaching festival.

[2] Mesopotamia.

[3] Monobazus was the son of Izates, the famous proselyte on whom Josephus passes such large encomiums. Helena was queen of the same country, who was a great benefactress to Jerusalem, and, after her death, had a stately tomb erected to her memory near the city.

From Tyrus stairs and the Cendevian lake;
Herod his num'rous Galileans brings,
And thins his towns to show the pride of kings.
Strong Sephoris and rich Tiberias send[4]
Their choicest youths; Sebaste's lords attend.
Applauding their great founder, who his guests,
On Jordan's banks, at proud Herodian, feasts.[5]
Thus entertained, they wait, and guard him down
By Jericho to Salem's sacred town.
His rich paternal palace they prepare,
And, ranged before his gates, salute him there.
No sooner his approach the elders know,
Than to receive him in long state they go.
The Roman guards attend, loud shouts they made,
And on Antonia's towers their eagles spread;
Proclaim his honors, speak his fame abroad,
And raise the monster to a demigod.

Not so the Saviour entered Salem's gate!
No worldly honors on his footsteps wait;
He passed unheeded, no applause desired,
Displayed no trappings, and no guards required.
Warm from his soul celestial virtues spring,
And hovering angels guard unseen their king.
A private entry seemed his earnest choice;
But fame proclaimed him, and the just rejoice.
On his approach, as harbingers, were sent

---

[4] See Josephus's description of that town and its siege.

[5] A stately palace built by Herod the Great, near Jordan, and called by his own name; as also another which he had in Jerusalem.

Cephas and John, on heavenly errands bent;
Nor could these servants question their success;
Their Lord had sent them, and their Lord must bless.
These to the place appointed them repair,
Make known their message, and the room prepare;
Procure what Moses and his friends enjoin,[6]
The lamb, the herbs, the bread, and sacred wine.
Meanwhile, the crowd's hosannas to prevent,
He rounds the walls by Zion's steep ascent;
But vain his efforts their applause to shun,
The gath'ring swarms from every quarter run;
Fame bears the news through all the crowded gates,
And the vast town almost depopulates.
Thus when some godlike prince, by Heaven designed
The common benefactor of mankind,
Rises triumphant o'er himself and fame,
And aims by virtue to exalt his name,
Rejects the praises of the gazing throng,
And moves regardless of their idle song;
They watch his movements, all his footsteps trace,
And round his temples wreaths of laurels place:
So when the Saviour seemed resolved to go
In close disguise to shun the public show,
Through the thin cloud his brighter splendors shine,
The mortal form confessing the divine;
Forth pour thick myriads, his approach to meet,
And scatter flowers and blessings at his feet.

---

[6] The cup of benediction, and the bread, were added to the passover by the successors of Moses; or rather, being at first only civil, and necessary to a meal, were, in process of time, reckoned sacred, because so nearly joined with what was so.

Arrived, the strangers press to see his face,
Nor was this wish confined to Abraham's race;
His growing fame to Gentile nations spread,
For light divine had struck their idols dead.
The servile gods to their black caves retire,[7]
And furious Ammon feels a hotter fire.
Athens, which first from Egypt's shores conveyed[8]
Exported gods, and turned them into trade,—
To foreign markets did these cargoes bear,
And furnished Greece with this important ware,—
Resigned its wealthy traffic, to adore
A sovereign Deity, unknown before.
Taught by the Sibyls, in whose leaves they find
"A promised Prince, whose reign should bless mankind,
In scorned Judea born," these Grecians came,
Struck by the Saviour's miracles and fame;
For strong report of this amazing guest
Had drawn some thousands to the public feast.
These with some Tyrian merchants hastened down*
To new-named Julias, once Bethsaida's town;
And begged the friendly people whom they knew,
To gain for them with Christ an interview.
They with true friendship their assistance lend,
For in this court they had a well-known friend
To introduce them. Meeting, they embrace;
('T was Philip of the Galilean race,
Whom long they 'd known); they asked him to presume

[7] It is Cowley's thought, who calls the Dæmons so, because obedient to the charms of magicians.

[8] Herodotus says, the Greeks had all their gods from Egypt, and the Athenians were the chief traders in those commodities.

* John xii. 20, etc.

To take these Grecians to his Master's room.*
Their friend and Andrew to the Saviour went,
And their request respectfully present.
Our Lord with smiles their application hears;
For well he knew their wishes and their fears.
Then as improving the occasion, spoke,
And words like these the solemn silence broke: —

"Though all vain pomp I utterly disclaim,
Nor in my own, but in my Father's name,
As yet have taught; yet, since he does attest
My filial glory, then it must be best.
Now is the hour I shall be truly known,
And men shall see my native glory shown.
Now that false traitor, who from honor fell,
Yet seized this world, and taught it to rebel,
Transfixed with vengeance, sinks, and finds his destined hell.
But ah! how dear an empire must I win!
On what a throne my promised reign begin!
How sad an exaltation waits me, where
I must in groans the ruined world repair!
Nor me my friends, nor will I then disown,
But with them mount a more resplendent throne;
I, crowned with thorns, o'er rocks the way will lead,
Nor must their feet on beds of roses tread.
This race of heroes must, through toil and pain,
Dyed with their blood, the diadem obtain;
But in proportion to the ills they bear,
The crown will brighten which my saints shall wear.

* John xii. 20.

We shrink from suffering, but of this bereft
The Son of Man would have no conflict left.
Reward or merit; yet do what we can,
His laboring heart has something still of man.
Fain would his flesh avoid the shock, and fain
His soul shrink back from agonizing pain.
I feel in pangs these more than human woes,
And all my soul, dissolved in anguish, flows.
The cloud comes on; — O Heavenly Father, save;
Preserve that life which thy compassions gave;
If man can thus redeemed ascend the sky; —
If not, I yield, and calmly wait to die.
It can not be, I therefore freely give
Myself a victim, that the world may live.
But, oh, my Father, ere I take my flight
To distant regions of unclouded light,
To guard my followers from impending shame
Speak from the skies, and glorify my name." *
He said, and paused; the lambent lightnings fly,
And sounds like thunder murmured round the sky;
Then was the voice of God distinctly heard
In awful accents, and the people feared:
"I have already glorified thy name,
And thus once more thy Deity proclaim."
This powerful voice their firmest rancor shook,
And some asserted that an angel spoke.

Displeased with flatteries which our pride approves,
Christ from the crowd himself unseen removes;
Suspends their vision, or eludes their sense,

* John xii. 28–30.

And with the ten goes undiscovered thence.
Still more amazed, they strictly searched around,
Each street and suburb searched; and had they found
Jesus, he had by force been king of Israel crowned.
"'Twas thus great Saul," the throng exclaimed,
"withdrew;
But holy Samuel his retirement knew."
For factious arms they instantly prepare,
And with regret the Roman ensigns bear.
Nor were his honors from the crowd alone,
The elders knew him whom they would not own;
These men, on fame and reputation stood,
Aimed to be great, but failed in being good.
When fame results from some fair actions done,
'T is good; if not, far better lost than won.
Happy the common race of humankind;
Happier in this, since for their eyes or mind
They no disguises need; vain forms they break,
And sense but dictates what they freely speak.
The common mass, his foes could not endure;
Scarce was their safety, more than his, secure.[9]
Christ, who perceived their strong, misguided zeal,
Saw priests oppose, but saw the mob prevail,
On either side their conduct disapproved,
Nor such licentious reformation loved.
Int'rest, not truth, their partial suffrage draws;
They hail him king, but disobey his laws.

---

[9] It is said that the Pharisees feared the people, and were not for seizing our Saviour on the feast day, lest there should be an uproar among the populace; but their virulence against Christ soon made them alter their opinion.

The elders saw his doctrines more prevail,
And felt with pain their false foundations fail;
And, as successes crowned what they abhorred,
They grew determined to employ the sword;
Since each perceived that in this crisis all
Their impositions or his cause must fall.

The fiend employed in his infernal cell
Received a spy returned from earth to hell,
Who brought the dreadful news. Repulsed before,
The conclave he resolves to call no more,
Till some great act achieved, some crime was done,
So black as Satan should not blush to own.
From every squadron silently he drew
Such imps as he most fit for action knew;
Such as all parties might to his engage;
Some skilled in raising tumults, storms, and rage.
The same that tempted Dathan ere he fell,
And dragged the culprit afterward to hell.
Some, like himself when cheating facile Eve,
Trained in his school, were practiced to deceive.
These, sent from hell, the sons of guilt affright
With monstrous forms and spectres of the night.
With joys unpure surcharge the guilty breast,
And rob the watchful of their tranquil rest.
Some miser fiends among infernals base,
The lowest sunk of all the apostate race,
These, mines, and burial-grounds, and treasures hold,
And howl in tombs around their secret gold.
Yet these, let virtue plead whate'er it can,
Maintain the strongest property in man.

How few are proof against their fatal arts,
When Satan barbs with gold his fiery darts!
Like those of love, they no distinction make;
Kings, priests, and peasants, they assail and take.
Rank, sex, and age, weak, infamous, and bold.
Submit alike to all-subduing gold.

These spirits, their leader, in whose cause they fell,
Mustered in haste the strong gens-d'armes of hell;
With conscious pride his household troops reviewed,
And then his scheme to ruin man pursued.
Arrived on earth, each legion takes its post,
Explores the town, and ranges every coast;
But, as their tyrant ordered, all conceal,
Lest some kind angel should to man reveal
Their real design. Some did themselves dispose
To rouse their friends, and some to tempt their foes.
Foremost in rank, their leader wings his way
(For night had now relieved the weary day)
To Salem's towers; and, as the rebel flew,
A glance full-fraught with hellish curses threw.
He seemed to fear the people would repent,
And by their prayers the destined wrath prevent.
Straight to the Pontiff's palace he repaired,
In form adapted to elude the guard.
The bolted gates, he, penetrating, passed,
Swift and invisible, and round him cast
The form of old Hircanus, grave and sage,
The same his stature, visage, mein, and age;
His voice the same, his hands a censer bore,
And his gray hairs the sacred mitre wore.

In still and deep repose the Pontiff lay,
Tired with the work and pleasures of the day.
Stern Caiaphas — the fiend approached his bed,
And leaning on his hand his palsied head,
With loud and lamentable voice expressed
The great occasion that disturbed his rest.
"Awake, my son, thy flocks demand thy care;
Or now awake, or sink in deep despair.
But canst thou sleep; and meanly stoop so low,
And yield the day to our triumphant foe,
Who now, by thy remissness powerful grown,
Instructs the crowd, and claims them for his own?
I saw the temple left without defense; —
My grave insulted when I rose from thence —
Perceived thy sword neglected where it stood,
And sheathed in rust, that should have shined in blood.
Torn is that veil which kept from vulgar eyes
The needful secret of so rich a prize.
Was it for this my great forefathers broke
The claims of strangers and the heathen yoke?
For this, the bulwarks round their country stood,
And shed such seas of honorable blood?
O, ye great Maccabees! too dear it cost
To buy what your degenerate sons have lost.
Say, did Hercanus thus your line disgrace,
Or meanly act beneath your glorious race?
He grasped your censer, and your sword he bore,
Sustained your mitre, and your crown he wore;
In spite of fortune he preserved your fame,
Nor basely trembled at great Pompey's name.

His successors scarce half his power share,
The Roman thraldrom is but part you bear.
To yield is manly when great men subdue,
But an obscure imposter conquers you.
If herbs and names perform what has been done,[10]
This should be known to sons of Solomon.
Why will you suffer the exploits you see
Performed by Christ, and twelve as weak as he?
You see them prosper, and the crowd forsake,
And idly view the proselytes they make.
Swarms press on swarms, around his standard wait,
And seize the ensigns and the bolts of fate.
These will he soon to bolder deeds persuade,
The sacred Sanhedrim and throne invade,
The crown and sceptre at his feet to bring,
And hail this Galilean wretch your king.
But shall he rise, or are my fears in vain?
O'er none but slaves, a slave deserves to reign.
He reigns not yet, thus far is Israel free,
And will with blood maintain their liberty;
Quench the new flame, and pull this serpent down,
And stop his efforts to obtain a crown.
But though you can not former ills redress,
Present and future you may still suppress;—

[10] The Rabbis talk much of the power of charms, and profess the knowledge of them. They pretend that they deduce it from Solomon. Josephus tells a very grave story, as if he believed it, of one who did strange things with an herb, casting out devils, and bringing persons to life again, when they lay senseless. The Jews have a foolish tale, that our Saviour wrought all his wonders (against the *reality* of which, it seems they have nothing to say) by virtue of the Tetragammaton sewed up in his thigh.

Go then, dispatch him, or his fate convey,
And purge the town on this great festal day.
Go, call the Sanhedrim — you see the way."

He said, and sunk, — the Pontiff raised his eyes,
And, wildly staring, for his guards applies;
Then, trembling, answered — "Yes, thou mighty shade,
Thy wholesome counsel shall be soon obeyed;
This day he dies; his destiny is past,
The next revolving sun shall be his last."

His ent'ring guards he round the city sends,
And calls to council his congenial friends.
The priests and elders of inferior sway
His powerful mandate instantly obey;
They knew the business was of urgent need,
Which both demanded secrecy and speed.
But though in secret these their message do,
Joseph had learned it, and Gamaliel too;
Who to the council with the rest repair,
And find their friend, sage Nicodemus, there.
Assembled, Caiaphas ascends the chair,
And thus begins, with an assuming air: —

"Fathers of Israel! You will soon perceive
The cause which made me this disturbance give
To all assembled; neither do I fear
Unkind reproofs from any persons here.
The great occasion then is known full well
To all the favorers of Israel.
All must the growth of Nazareth's sect perceive,

And on their prophet see the world believe;
How undeplored our own and nation's fate,
Unless we help,—nay, this may be too late.
Can we our church and state survey unmoved,
By age grown reverend, and by God belov'd?
Can we forsake these walls, and see the place
Seized and dishonored by an earth-born race,
Sink to contempt, and meanly quit our seat,
Die in disgrace, or live obscurely great?
Or, if we give ourselves and town away,
Can we those laws which he assails betray,
Behold our temple from its glory hurled,
And Salem made a proverb to the world?
At thrones and empires the impostor drives,
Deep lays his schemes, and secret plots contrives;
What angels taught he threatens to repeal,
And would like Moses new commands reveal.
But why should we debate these points in awe?
His birthplace, parents, and his friends we know;
His father follows a mechanic trade,
And He in learning has no progress made.
Yet this vile upstart, though connected thus,
Assumes a power to teach the world, and us.
The crowd, I grant, his miracles proclaim,
But did not Egypt's jugglers do the same?
'T is true, he gives to wond'rous actions birth,
But evil spirits still patrol the earth.
We must not then our law for wonders leave,
Nor a false prophet, tempted thus, receive.
Should he prevail (which, O avert, ye powers
That rule the world!), his laws succeed to ours.

What should we gain — what has he more complete
Than our great prophet? What sublime or great?
For fishers, carpenters, his laws may do;
But, reverend fathers, not for me and you,
Rulers and warriors, to brave deeds inclined;[11]
These clog the soul, and sink the rising mind.
Smote and despised, you must the culprit spare,
Love those who hate you, and their insults bear.
Now sunk too low, he straight too high aspires,
And strange impracticable deeds requires;
His specious doctrine wages war with fate,
Suppressing anger, mirth, revenge, and hate.
Nor does he leave thought, sense, or reason free,
But clogs the whole with frightful mystery.[12]
His word is law; none else will he endure;
And where this reigns, no state can be secure.
Our crimes and punishment he makes his themes,
Our holy rites contemptuously blasphemes;
Our sacred temple he disdains to spare;
What more than this could bold Samaria dare?[13]
Serpents and vipers this high court he calls,
Sly hypocrites, gay tombs, and whited walls.
Our power to censure, this proud sect denies,

---

[11] So says the subtile Machiavel, who understood the Christian religion so ill, that he says it makes men mean-spirited, and is an enemy to magnanimity and glory.

[12] I have endeavored to make Caiaphas as good a spokesman for the Atheists and Deists as I possibly could; though I hope Joseph fully answers every part of his argument.

[13] The Samaritans did commonly put affronts on the Jewish temple; once particularly, Josephus says, they came in the night-time and scattered bones about it, which occasioned a great tumult.

And all our holy curses they despise;
Our lawful profits term unholy gain,
And Israel's fathers scarcely treat as men.
As to himself, who thus aspires to reign,
He freely speaks, nay, eats with the unclean;
Breaks our traditions, mocks us when we grieve;
In short, if Corban lives, he can not live.
But still beyond all mortals he presumes,
And to himself the name of God assumes;
Makes God his equal, boasts of ancient birth,
And says his wisdom formed the spacious earth.
He with the Godhead claims co-equal right,
And calls himself, the *Son*, the *Word*, of might.
This *Son*, this *Word*, of pristine glory shorn,
From days of old, from everlasting born,
Derides our power, mortality defies,
And claims his kindred in the deathless skies.
If crimes like these we tamely see and hear,
What can we merit, but a fate severe
As what th' impostor threatens? — how can we
Ourselves, our children, and our nation free
From the black guilt and fate of blasphemy?
This restless troubler of our Israel dies;
This fatal Achan we must sacrifice.
And, if the sacred ephod aught inspire,
I feel the glowing sparks of heavenly fire.
Then hear what my enlightened mind foresees,
Can that be bad which Heaven itself decrees?
'Israel in vain attempts her fate to fly,*
Unless for all her sons one man devoted die.'"

*John xi. 50.

Thus having said, the whole affair he leaves.
The motley council variously receives
The warm oration; some his zeal admired,
And thought his counsel by some God inspired;—
Thought him deserving marvelous esteem,
And placed the safety of the state on him.
While those who saw with more impartial eyes,
Pierced the thin veil, the varnish, and disguise,
Which clothed in sophistry his specious lies.
They paused a while, but none the silence broke,
Till armed with prudence Nicodemus spoke:—

"Unfeigned respect to God's high priest is due,
And much regard to what may drop from you,
Men, brethren, fathers; yet I needs must say,
To those who seem so forward to obey:
Their ardent zeal our welfare to secure,
However just, seems rather premature.
Well has it been observed, and none denies,
Our laws are sacred, the blasphemer dies,
Comdemned by these; but, the same statutes guard
The culprit's life, till his defense is heard.
Who could be safe, might popular fame accuse?
None here, I dare be bold, that judge would choose.
Not that I would an advocate be thought,
For those who seek, or Salem's ruin sought;
But truth and justice from my lips demand
These short remarks, and guard me where I stand."

More had he said, but Rama's wealthy lord
With fervent zeal thus seized the closing word:

"That cautious fear of censure is not mine,
To own a Master who appears divine.
Let naked truth prevail, plain, natural sense,
Without the gaudy paint of eloquence.
Though interest suffer, or though pride repine,
I own him, I confess him; Lord, I'm thine;—
He came from heaven — his laws must be divine.
I love my country, but his name adore;
Feel much for rites, but feel for justice more.
This sterling motive is my sole pretense
For rising thus to speak in his defense.
Can int'rest prompt the person you despise
To mask his vices in a deep disguise?
Can he relax those laws his words dispense,
Or be rewarded to delude our sense;
Destroy those virtues which his life proclaims,
Or undermine the truths at which he aims?
This seems the most improbable pretense
That e'er was palmed on spotless innocence.
How oft to law and prophets he appeals,
Myself have heard; nor other truths reveals,
But what within our sacred volumes lie,
Though veiled till now in clouds and mystery
How oft has he (I still my witness give,
Which till this hour you would not disbelieve)
Declared one tittle should not pass away
Till this vast frame of heaven and earth decay!
We are but men, nor all things can discern;
Are we too wise from Heaven itself to learn?
When the orac'lous ephod used to shine,
Did any doubt the characters divine?

Say not 't is ceased; see here deciphered still,
More plain and legible, the Father's will.
Th' Eternal Word does mortal mold assume,—
Our wretched clay,—does he in this presume?
Announced from Heaven, to teach the world he came;—
Could e'er impostors yet pretend the same?
If so, they honor or advantage seek;
But Zion's King is humble, lowly, meek.
If we Heaven's attestation should deny,
Twice spoke in thunder from the opening sky,[14]
In which the Father's high regard was shown,
And Christ acknowledged as his only Son,
We Moses too must leave in clouds and smoke;
For Heaven but *once* the ten commandments spoke.

"But Egypt's jugglers wondrous signs did show;
'T is owned; but did not our great Moses, too?
And yet you all confess his mission clear;
Assign the diff'rence, and we 'll find it here.
Theirs for false gods and idols vain were wrought;
His in defense of sacred truths were brought.
Thus God's own arm their magic charms o'erpowered.
As Aaron's serpent all their swarms devoured.
Long had predictions said, 'The chosen band
Shall, deep enslaved, remain in Mizraim's land,
Sustain great hardships, smart beneath the rod,

---

[14] Once at Jordan, and once at the feast; indeed, there was a third attestation in the same manner, at Mount Tabor, at the Transfiguration; but this Joseph could not be supposed to know, because the three disciples only were witnesses of it, and were forbidden to disclose it before the resurrection.

Till manumitted by the power of God.'
This train of wonders was but kindly sent,
To mark, promote, and lead to the event.
Truth, justice, mercy, prophecy, and sign,
Beyond dispute, attest our Lord divine.
What Rabbi e'er so clearly taught before
How man might God in spirit and truth adore?
Moses, though much, did not all truths discern;
He left us something to explain and learn.
His life and death avow the cause I plead;
Why else did prophets to this prince succeed?
Why did this seer another teacher show,
If from his laws the world might all things know?
Behold this Teacher, true, if God be true;
For none but God such mighty works could do.
We first had gold, but he refines our gold,
And his new law fills and explains the old.
The piece before was masterly and fine,
But touched by him it glows with life divine.
When Moses said—'The Lord thy God will raise *
A wond'rous prophet in the latter days;'
Did not Jehovah in reply declare
Death to such rebels as refused to hear?
And what are those who basely spend their breath
In plots, and councils, to promote his death?
How many a prophet sings—how full and plain,
Of his sublime nativity, and reign,
And wond'rous works! If need of proof there be,
Even Caiaphas has owned that this is he.
His time and coming heathen tribes confess,

* Deut. xviii. 15, etc.

And wait him now,—shall Israel then do less?
Look nature through, in all her works are found
Systems and worlds by him together bound.
Should God, but these, no other witness give,
The laws of reason urge us to believe.
Say, shall we then this nobler gift abuse,
And all its proofs indignantly refuse;
Invert our natures, contradict our sense,
And disbelieve through weight of evidence?
So just his laws, that, were they but obeyed,
The world would soon a paradise be made.
You call him mean: may I that meanness have!
Still may my passion be my reason's slave!—
To tread on wrongs is to be great and brave.
He, who above himself and others lives,
Obtains a conquest when his soul forgives.
He who defies death, pain, and tortures too,
But dares not one unrighteous action do;—
Avows his friends however far disjoined;—
Withstands the shocks of earth and hell combined;—
Contemns whole Sanhedrims against him sworn;—
And bears, unmoved, the stream of public scorn;—
Sustains assaults, and still himself secures,
And all the rage of hostile fiends endures;—
Legions of men, as black as these, defies;—
And leaves his vindication with the skies;
Who aims his honor and his soul to save;—
If he be base—the coward world is brave.
Too well you know he is not base or mean;
Your words refute you when you change the scene.
Would he reform too much?—too pure his law?

In modesty that shameful plea withdraw!
Yet here's the point — who can such strictness bear?
We must not steal, nor lie, nor rail, nor swear.
A spotless breast he loves; his laws require
Men to subdue the rage of base desire;
Their terms sublime are possible and free
To all who love unvarnished piety.
What reason's voice forbids us to receive,
He neither bids us practice nor believe.
If sunk below our dignity in vice,
The Saviour comes to make us great and wise,
To raise us to the state of Paradise.
Whoe'er did the three Principles deny,[15]
Gentile or Jew? No other mystery
Unknown to us his wholesome law contains;
The rest, like fables, spring from fertile brains.
But, above all the slanders which abound,
And, like some curses, those who cast them wound,
None is so strange or deadly, as that He
Is to the civil state an enemy.
Can purest order anarchy approve?
As justly may the hawk implead the dove,

---

[15] I think it is demonstrable that all sects of Philosophers did own the three Principles, and consequently had some notion of a Trinity, though few of them were wholly orthodox. The Pythagoreans own the first, second, and third ONE, the third partaking of the first and second. The same I could prove of others, out of Plutarch, nay, out of Julian himself. Nor is there, as far as I know, anything in the Christian religion besides the doctrine of the *Trinity* (on which the *incarnation* depends) that is properly mysterious; I mean, not clear and fathomable by our reason, when once revealed.

War suit the Prince of Peace, or hate join heaven-born
love!
If he one Lord proclaims, one faith requires,
Our church professes all that he desires,
Yet rational and free he leaves us still,
Nor interdicts the intellect or will.
Reason, though impotent, still warns from sin,
God's law without, his gentle Spirit within.
In his commands example leads the way,
He prays himself when he instructs to pray;
Reproves, and shows to others who reprove,
That strength of argument consists in love.
Harlots and publicans whom you disdain,
Dissolved in tears, he smiles to entertain;
Abhors the hypocrite, all hearts he knows,
The secret villain glories to expose;
With those he can almost be angry; these
He plainly tells God's righteous plagues shall seize.
And, O my country, if resolved to make
Their crimes thy own, thou must their doom partake.
Why wilt thou not the surgeon's hand endure,
To probe the wound which yet admits a cure?
Will God in heaven from dust a check receive,
Nor thunder till the creature gives him leave?
Can he blaspheme himself, or be afraid
Of threat'ning mandates which his worms have made?
Hear my confession then, 't is plain and free;
Once more, 'The Word is God, and Jesus He.'
Hence, though the Pontiff urges, ''T is decreed
That for our sins this spotless Lamb must bleed;'
To crimes this can not force us, or excuse;

Fig-leaves like these, even Adam would not use.[16]
Reason, with truth and grace, our steps must guide;
Else you defend the blackest parricide.
Nay, Heaven appears in guilt much deeper far,
And we in murder but abetters are.

"Since, then, 't is plain that this just man is free
From all those crimes which spite and calumny,
Conjoined, would gather to reproach his name,
To blast his deeds, and tarnish all his fame;—
Since this great Prophet — infinitely more —
This great Messiah, promised long before,
Appears to bless us and dispel our pride,
And kindly offers to become our guide,—
Proceed we then, without one murmuring thought,
To seize those favors which his goodness brought.
The great compassions which his doctrines teach
Have left us still within his mercy's reach.
If what is past we through his grace amend,
He will forgive us, and become our friend."

He said, and sat; the wondering senate gazed;
Some seemed offended, all appeared amazed;
In angry silence his opposers frown,
While some applauded what they durst not own.
So when, rough Boreas, thy black squadrons sweep
The aged bosom of the hoary deep,
In hills of foam the angry billows rise,
Forsake their caverns, and invade the skies;
But when bless'd Zephyr, from his spicy vales,

[16] He never pleaded *necessity* for his sin.

Rides gently out with soft Etesian gales,
The storm subsides, the waves forget to roar,
Move on in peace, and softly kiss the shore,
And, smiling, wonder why they raged before:
Thus to resistless truth their passions yield,
And reason's voice almost regained the field;
Dissembled rage affected to relent,
And all appeared to hesitate assent:—
All but the fierce Caiaphas, who, in reply,
Would nothing grant, yet nothing could deny;
He seemed ashamed; yet in the cause engaged,
When quite confounded, grew the more enraged.
He paused a while; at length his voice regains,
And, all confused, denounces and complains,
Reproaches, censures, argues, and reviles,
Commands with frowns, and makes his court with smiles;
To passions, int'rests, in their turns applies,
And truth and decency alike defies.
These strange appeals the faithless senate swayed
Who now their conscience, now his voice, obeyed;
The last who speaks, speaks best in the debate,
And truth and falsehood seemed of equal weight.
At length the *prudent* were compelled to yield,
For fraud and tumult overspread the field;
Those bent on blood the greatest number bore,
And truth and reason could be heard no more.

But while contending minds and interests fight,
Beneath the shelter of the silent night
Our Lord, who knew the power and rage of hell,

Takes his last supper, and his last farewell.
He knew his friends, the treach'rous Judas, knew,
Saw his own sufferings, and what all would do;
Yet meekly bows to the afflictive rod,
And yields submission to the will of God.

First, on the lamb, as use required, they fed,
Like their forefathers when from Egypt led;
For all those rites were his peculiar care,
Which apt allusions to his mission bear.
The supper ended, he before them spread
The cup of blessing, and the hallowed bread;
Which in his hands alternately he took,
And, kindly giving his disciples, spoke:
"Take this, and eat; behold in this designed
Your Saviour's body broken for mankind;
Let this memorial, when from earth he goes,
Record his love, and malice of his foes;"
Then took the cup which mystic wine contained,
Described its virtues, and its use explained:
"This is my blood, for man's redemption shed;
Drink, *all*, of *this*, as *all* received the bread.
I die; the traitor and my fate I know,
But woes await the wretch by whom I go.
I see him here, his hand is on the board;
He eats my bread, and yet betrays his Lord."

A speech so strange excited all their fears,
And bathed their souls in more than outward tears;
Each felt its force, and, gazing on the rest,
Examined closely his alarmed breast.

For information all to Christ apply,
Each puts the question — "*Master, is it I?*"
With falt'ring tongue, but undissembling eyes,
Iscariot asks; to whom the Lord replies,-
"On this occasion thou canst well divine,
But to my friends this sop shall be the sign."
Judas, receiving this, forsakes the rest,
And yields to Satan all his guilty breast;
Then to the Sanhedrim directs his way,
To sell his Lord, and make his blood their prey;
This fair occasion soon decides their strife,
And Judas bargains for his Master's life.
The few, who firm in virtue's cause remain,
Soon felt the tide with which they strove in vain;
And, on perceiving Christ's impending doom,
Entered their protest and forsook the room.

Meanwhile the traitor from the court implored
A band of soldiers to secure his Lord.
To him, he said, his hours and haunts were known,
And he would lead them to the spot alone.
But, with revenge and avarice partly swayed,
He for his crime expected to be paid;
He would of silver thirty pieces have,
The average value of a common slave.
Elate with joy, the Sanhedrim provide
Money and soldiers for their cursèd guide.
These took their torches, and with rancor went,
And left the senate waiting the event.

Our Lord's disciples, weighed with grief and fear
At his discourses that his hour was near,

Though quite unconscious that this fatal night
Concealed Iscariot's conduct from their sight,
Demanded comfort to console their breast;
Which Christ perceived, and thus himself expressed: —

"Let not your hearts be troubled, but believe,*
And God will richest consolation give.
For though I go, no cause remains to fear;
In heaven I'll guard you, as I guard you here.
I go before; nor can I if I stay,
To these bright mansions mark the shining way;
But love like mine with constant fervor glows,
And, though remote, no diminution knows.
I, when removed, the Comforter will send,
The wisest Advocate, the gentlest Friend,
Whom naught but sin can from your breast remove
Nor will he leave you till you cease to love.
Sure of this Friend, you may with smiles despise
The daring efforts of your enemies.
The world will hate you, if your lives are true;
It hated me before it hated you.
Yet know its rage will prove your greatest friend,
And kindly waft you to your journey's end;
To your advantage all its storms will be,
And teach you best to know yourselves and me.
Firm to my cause, and to each other, stand;
A band of Christians is a deathless band.
Were you unguarded, you would soon be shown
A prey to weakness, to yourselves unknown;
When strong temptations and your foes assail,

* John xiv. 1, etc.

Your boasted courage and your faith would fail;
By me forsaken, you would leave my side,
And scorn your Lord in whom you now confide."

Cephas, who heard, exclaimed — "Lord, I can die
For thy dear name; but not thy name deny."
The rest concurred, oppressed with virtuous pain,
And all such baseness utterly disdain.
The Saviour spoke: "Too well your hearts I know
Beyond deception, as th' event will show.
But as for him whose zeal such rashness wears,
Who seems elated to despise his fears,
Thrice ere this morn its mournful beams display,
Ere twice the cock proclaims approaching day,*
He 'll fall an awful victim to his fear,
Deny my name and basely curse and swear.
But I shall pray, and shall be heard above,
And Peter's crime shall be subdued by love.

"I go, O Father, to thy will resigned;
But these my lambs must still remain behind.
O guard them here, all intimately one,
Like thee, O righteous Father, and the Son.
Let thy bright image on their bosoms shine,
Enriched with grace, and filled with love divine;
Till the deluded world triumphant see
That these from me came forth, as I from thee;
The genuine glories of fair virtue own,
Like those which beam from thy illustrious throne.
When life's dull scene has led to happier days,

* Mark xiv. 30, 68, 72.

To that bless'd world thy genuine servants raise;
Through me to them shall all thy goodness shine,
Theirs the enjoyment, their redemption mine.
And may that bliss, which, ere the world was made,
Thy Son through vast eternity enjoyed,
Reward my saints for all their suff'rings past,
With cloudless joys that shall forever last!"

Thus having said, o'er Kidron's brook and plain
To sweet Gethsemane he walks again,
With Cephas and the Zebedean pair,
To seek in shades a close retirement there.
The rest he leaves; nor to these chosen talks,
But in deep silence meditating walks.
At length, in sighs which agitate his breast,
The Saviour thus his agonies expressed.

"My soul, distracted and amazed with grief,
Looks round the world in vain to find relief,
I feel death's heavy weight with loads of care
Too much for frail humanity to bear.
Why should my servants with their Master go,
And see his sufferings to partake his woe,
With pensive bosoms catch contagious grief,
And mourn, unable to confer relief?"
He said, and moved into the deepest shade,
Where on the ground he prostrate fell, and prayed.
But, oh! what griefs, what agonizing love,
Did the Redeemer both sustain and prove!
Amazing sorrows, which we can't conceive,—
The God eclipsed, appeared the man to leave!

"My Father, oh! if possible it be,—
Unbounded might! what is not so to thee?"
The Saviour cries, as on his face he lay,
"O take this cup, this bitter cup, away!
The wrath divine unmixed this cup contains,
And hellish poison agitates my veins.
'T is not, alas! a single death I dread;
How calmly could I lean my weary head
On the cold earth and common mother's breast,
And gladly glide to everlasting rest!
Of public death the infamy I scorn,
Though ranked with slaves when to the gibbet borne;
Nor shame, nor fear, should urge me to complain,
Though death's dread pomp were to augment the pain.
O Heaven, thy vengeance constitutes the curse,
Than pain, or shame, or death; or torments worse.
O can I, must I, be from him removed,
Who from eternity has been belov'd?
Must I despair, who never saw that brow
With frowns disguised, nor clouds obscured, till now?
But if, alas! no other way is given
To gain the favor of avenging Heaven,
Resigned I die, for human crimes atone,
And tread the wine-press of thy wrath alone.
I come, O injured Father; Lord, I yield;
Nor shall thy Son be vanquished in the field.
For this great end the foes of man I meet,
Nor view my actions with the least regret.
Had man with love obeyed his God, to cure
His wounds I should no agonies endure."

From painting by Hofmann

CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE

More pains did then the suffering Saviour feel
Than hearts when trembling on the pointed steel.
What deep convulsive agonies he found,
Which every part of soul and body wound,—
Which all the harmony of both displace,
While blood and sweat ran mingled down his face!
As much as holy man could bear, and more,
The Son of God without a murmur bore;
And would have triumphed o'er this host of foes,
And risen victorious from this sea of woes,
Had only earth and hell their forces joined,
Nor Heaven augmented what this league combined.
But angry Heaven, that seemed severe while just,
Weighed down his soul, and lodged it in the dust.
It longed to sally from its dark abode,
Pressed with our sins' intolerable load.
He sinks, half buried in a world of woe,
Though hands unseen administer the blow.
Nor could he longer keep the field alone,
But to his Father poured his piercing groan.
The Father heard, and glorified his name,
And shook all nature's universal frame;
To his relief a mighty angel sent,
And fearful nature trembled as he went.
He consolation to our Lord conveyed,
Knelt by his side, and soothed him while he prayed;
Revived his soul, did all his strength replace;
And wiped the sanguine moisture from his face.
Renewed his power, he owned that guardian care
Which God bestowed in answer to his prayer,
Sustained with vigor the incumbent load,

And urged his plea in man's behalf with God;
Expressed his love, nor offered to complain,
Though strength renewed, renewed his sense of pain.

Hither let Greece her boasted heroes bring,
And see them fade by Salem's peaceful King.
Let him approach, who Œta's hill did rove,
The boast of fable, and the son of Jove.
Enraged Alcides, mad with burning pain,
Waged war with Heaven, and struggled with his chain,
In groans of rage and wickedness expired,
And like a demon from the world retired.
Such are the heroes on the lists of fame
And such the gods that grace the heathen name.

Saviour, forgive! 't is almost blasphemy
To name at once their spurious gods and thee.
Like thee in dignity, what idols dare,—
What wretched man with God's own Son compare?
O Root of Jesse, may our actions prove
How much we love thee for thy dying love!
Through earth's wide realm may war and discord cease,
And sterling virtue lead to lasting peace!
Meanwhile, his three sad friends, with sleep oppressed,*
Which closed their eyes, while sorrow filled the breast,
On nature's couch in darkness lay reclined,
And stole repose for body and for mind;

* Matt. xvi. 36.

But when our Lord, who had retired to weep;
Returned and found them overcharged with sleep,
He woke them, saying — "Is it thus you prove
Your boasted courage and your boasted love?
For all my service can you think it hard
One tedious hour to be your Master's guard?
If so, let int'rest banish your repose;
For know, you slumber in the arms of foes.
Oh! watch and pray, your Master bids you fear;
For Judas, Satan, and my death are near."
Thence to the shades our Lord again repairs,
Resumes his fervor, and renews his prayers.
Twice he comes back; as oft his friends he found
O'ercome with sleep, in stubborn sorrow drowned.
At last returning, "Take your rest," he cries,
"And, if you can, indulge your drowsy eyes;
I sleep no more till the great ransom's paid;
The hour is come — the Saviour is betrayed.
Yet still he warns you, who remiss have been,
Nor leaves those friends who did not watch with him.
Once more, arise, let prudence be your guide,
And for your safety or your death provide."

Thus having said, they started in affright,*
And saw strange fires illuminate the night;
Torches and guards in solemn state appear,
And noisy rabbles followed in the rear.
On their approach confusion filled the place,
And fixed dismay on each disciple's face.
Once more was Christ compelled to interpose

* Matt. xxvi. 47; Mark xiv. 43; Luke xxii. 47; John xviii. 3.

Between his timid friends and spiteful foes;
For in this combat perfectly he knew
His foes were men, and what these men should do;
Then boldly asked those guards who seemed afraid,
"Whom they pursued—for whom this uproar made."
"Jesus," they cried. "If that your business be,
No farther seek," he answers, "I am He."
O Power divine! at this majestic sound
The trembling guards fell prostrate to the ground;
Yet bent on blood they rise and forward go,
As if but hardened by the recent blow.
Again he asks,—again they urge the same,
And Christ once more avows his proper name;—
Adds, "If you seek me, let my friends depart;"
For still their welfare occupied his heart.

Then hasty Cephas from its scabbard drew
His ready sword, and on the rabble flew,
Repels their onsets, deals his strokes around;
Resolved to murder, or inflict a wound.
The crowds retire, not anxious to engage
His forward zeal, thus armed with desp'rate rage.
Malchus alone stood firmer than the rest,
A noted servant of the sovereign priest;
To Peter's arm opposed his single might,
And met that sword which put their hosts to flight.
The challenge instantly the apostle took,
And cast on Malchus an unholy look.
Then reared his arm on his devoted head
And aims a blow to lodge him with the dead.
Malchus, before the fatal stroke was closed,

Guarded his head, but left his ear exposed;
The sword descending smote it to the ground,
And on his temple left a ghastly wound.
"Thus far," says Christ, "my suff'rance is to show
What all my servants, if I please, can do.
Cephas, with speed thy bloody sword return,
Nor furnish friends or foes with cause to mourn.
Once more attend thy captive Saviour's word;
He who unsheaths, must perish by the sword.
Think'st thou, were I determined not to die,
My applications would not reach the sky?
Were I resolved to terminate this strife,
Angelic legions would defend my life;
For these celestial bands adore me still:
But this is not my Heavenly Father's will."
Thus said, his hands the wounded ear restore,
And leave no scar where blood had gushed before.

Meanwhile the traitor, who was hov'ring near,
Deep in the crowd concealed his guilty fear;
He marked the progress of the past events,
But grows more hardened as his Lord relents;
Perceived the tenderness which Christ had used,
And thus contrived to make it more abused;—
In friendship's visor hides his odious guile,
And basely hails him with a kiss and smile.
Christ felt the wound, but spoke no more than this—
"Judas, betray'st thou Jesus with a kiss?"
The mark thus given had been by him assigned,
That in the night the guards our Lord might find.
They watched the signal, saw the kiss impressed,

And boldly seized, and dragged him from the rest.
When hurried thence, his scattered household fly
Like fearful lambs when prowling wolves are nigh.
Their faithful guide or torn from them or slain,
Even Peter flees, and owns his boasts are vain;
Surveys his fears, and at his dangers grieves,
But scarce his boasts or cowardice believes.

So when two kings, for perfidy or right,
In glitt'ring arms meet on the plains to fight,
If one be by his minister betrayed,
Or seized by foes, it makes his hosts afraid.
Scattered, confused, they flee themselves to hide,
And brave and worthless mingle with the tide.
But if with these, some kinsman to the throne,
In war expert, in triumphs hoary grown,
Be hurried thence, he leaves the vulgar mass,
And gains a post near some defile or pass,
Looks on his sword and blushes,—musing stands,
Then views his ensigns and victorious hands;
Rallies and fights till all his guards are gone,
Raves and falls back, and shakes as he goes on.

Straightway our Saviour to the hall they bear,
And with rude scoffs and blows torment him there;
Spit in his face, insult him with their jokes,
And bruise his flesh with their remorseless strokes;
Make him of wretches the obnoxious theme,
Who pluck his hairs, deride him, and blaspheme.
Such guards the King of heaven and earth attend,
And none but John avowed himself his friend.

Even he at first departed with the rest,
But soon in tears his captive Lord confessed;
Faces the throng, and pleads in his defense,
And boldly vindicates his innocence.

Cephas, who slowly followed in the rear,
Moved on, a captive to his guilty fear;
And, with the mob, as conscious of his fall,
Contrived to pass into the public hall.
While here, he seemed solicitous to hide
His guilty face from his once-honored guide.
At length detected by suspicious care,
The porter asks him—"If he was not there?"
Adding—"As well as memory can trace,
In yonder garden I beheld thy face."
"Him till this hour I never saw or knew,"
Peter replied, and suddenly withdrew.
His fears the fall'n apostle still detect,
And the same cause produced the same effect.
Charged home again, he gives the same replies,
And all as firmly as before denies.
The third who came and ventured to accuse,
Observed his idiom diff'rent from the Jews,
And hence conjectured, or presumed, that "he
Was doubtless bred in factious Galilee."
Pressed with this question, Peter cursed and swore,
And thought from hence they would suspect no more;
For no true Christian, perfectly they knew,
Would speak such words, or swear to things untrue.

Scarce had his perjured lips these accents borne,
Ere twice the bird of dawn proclaimed the morn.

The Saviour turned, and hapless Cephas, by,
Caught with a glance the lightning of his eye.
He did no more, nor more did Peter need;
His contrite heart, thus pierced, began to bleed.
Within their banks his tears refused to stay,
Or shut their sluices till the coming day;
His bursting woes, refusing all control,
Sought a recess to ease his wounded soul.
Deep in the shades his foul revolt he mourned,
And all the passions in full tide returned.
Anguish, affection, hope, remorse, and grief,
Demanded time to give his soul relief.
Remote from man, he poured his bitter moans,
And the dark desert echoed to his groans.
Prone on the earth he heaved repentant sighs,
And gave full vent to his dissolving eyes.
Indulgent Heaven, perceiving all his woes,
Pardoned his crime, and gave him some repose;
Forgave the language which his tears deplore,
And washed his bosom whiter than before.
Meanwhile the guiltless criminal was brought,
Bound, to the council which his murder sought.
To grace their deeds they sought some fair pretense,
But could not find one specious evidence.
All arts they use; now this, now that they try;
Now charge with treason, now with blasphemy.
To prove these points, they shamefully suborn
Some perjured wretches for their purpose sworn;
But these equivocate, and fall to strife,
And nothing witness that could reach his life.
Enraged, the wicked Caiaphas rose,

Whose thirst for blood, each word and action shows;
In every line of his distorted face
Fell murder lurked, revengeful, mean, and base:
"How long must we on this impostor wait?"
Foaming he cries;—"Confess, and meet thy fate.
Thy blasphemies, thy treasons quickly show,
Nor aim to cover what thy judges know.
Since proof appears — with speed acknowledge all,
And ask for mercy from this public hall.
Aim'st thou to pull the Roman ensigns down?
To seize the temple, and consume the town?
When did sedition last patrol the street?
Or thy cabal, to plot in secret, meet?"
To these base falsehoods Jesus Christ replies
Without resentment, "Well may I despise
Such calumnies as thou must disbelieve;
But since thou probably wilt not receive
Truth from my lips, I earnestly desire
That thou of those who heard me wouldst inquire;
And let their answers, fairly asked and given,
Decide the question in the face of Heaven.
Secret cabals I never loved nor sought,
Nor dang'rous doctrines in retirement taught;
My words the synagogues and temple know;
Let these my blasphemy and treason show."

On this, a soldier of the Jewish race
Lifts his rude hand, and strikes his heavenly face;
"Answer'st thou then the sov'reign Pontiff so?"
Our Lord, whose patience stood unconquered still,
Asks, what he said "indecent, false, or ill?

If well, why have I such harsh treatment found,
Struck uncondemned in open court, and bound?"
The Pontiff, seeing that his deep-laid schemes
Mocked his designs, and baffled all his aims,—
A new expedient to our Lord addressed,
To force the fatal secret from his breast.
"Art thou the sacred Promised Seed," he said,
"From ages doomed to bruise the serpent's head;
The destined Prince for Israel's mighty throne?
If so, no longer thy descent disown.
By our concealed unutterable name,
With whom thou dost a doubtful kindred claim,
Speak, I adjure thee, and the work is done,—
Art thou the Christ, the Father's only Son?"

"Although," said Christ, "thy whole design I take,
"And know what uses thou intend'st to make
Of my confession, I will not deny
My state, or name, or kindred in the sky.
He, whom ye view with such indignant scorn,
A mortal man to your tribunal borne,
Shall, high enthroned, in boundless light and bliss,
Command his judges to appear at His."

With wicked joy, "'T is past," the Pontiff cried,
"And you, my fathers, must his fate decide.
O that his doting followers were but near,
His owned, his public blasphemies to hear!
The fact is plain, if sense itself be true,
And justice has but simple work to do.
On doubtful points opinions may divide,

But demonstration here becomes your guide,
Points out the bias which your mind should take,
And guarantees the judgment which you make."

Matured in guilt, their suffrage rends the skies;
"Yes, the blasphemer dies," they cry, "he dies."
The court adjourned, to Pilate's palace went,
Mixed with the crowd to blast the innocent;
By secret tricks the public mind divide,
And practice arts to gain them to their side.
Dust crowns their heads, their shouts assail the air,
And thence with many a curse our patient Lord they
bear.

Contents of the Ninth Book

THIS book begins with a complaint that virtue is generally miserable in this world: which is silenced by the instance of the sufferings of our Saviour, though perfect Purity and Innocence: who is accused before Pilate by the High Priest and elders; but nothing being proved against him, the governor would have acquitted him. The rabble, excited by the Priests, are eager for his death. Pilate, hoping to divert them, hearing he was a Galilean, sends him to Herod; who, on his silence, despises, derides, and returns him to the governor, whose wife, having had a terrible vision relating to him, sends to her husband, by no means to concern himself in his death. On which he labored to deliver him, offering the Jews to give them his life, as was usual at the Passover; but they refused it, and asked Barabbas, a robber and murderer; and by their repeated tumults, and insinuations that unless Pilate would grant their desire he must be disloyal to Cæsar, they at last prevail, and our Lord is scourged and condemned. He is mocked by the soldiers, crowned with thorns, and, bearing his cross, dragged to execution. Judas's remorse; he hangs himself. Jesus' advice to the Matrons of Jerusalem, in his passage through the dolorous way; where he faints under his cross; and Simon, coming by, is compelled to assist him. Arrived at Calvary, he is crucified between two malefactors. The

Contents of the Ninth Book

Blessed Virgin, hearing the rumor of her son's being taken by the rabble, follows him to Calvary; and, finding him there, swoons at the sight. She is recovered by the soldiers. Her lamentation for the death of her Son: who, being moved with her sorrow, speaks to her from the cross; and commends her to the care of his friend, St. John, who stood near him. The discourse of the two thieves with our Saviour. The prodigies at Jerusalem. Our Saviour's exclamation on the cross, under the sense of God's anger for the sins of the world. The angels in heaven enraged to see their Master thus used, one of them gives the signal of war; Michael appears at their head, and they are all ready to descend to his rescue, and destroy the world. God the Father represses their anger; and shows them that it was necessary that our Lord should die for the sins of men. At which being appeased, they return to their usual posts and employments. Our Saviour's last agonies, his thirst, receiving the vinegar, and yielding up the ghost.

From painting by Munkacsy.

THE CRUCIFIXION

The Life of Christ

BOOK IX

O why was virtue made to be distressed?
Like Noah's dove, no place of ease or rest
In this tumultuous world she ever found,
By fortune's giddy impulse dragged around;
And sometimes crushed on the relentless ground.
Her best-loved children meanly, humbly, go,
Friendless and poor, contemptible and low;
Exposed to pinching want and sharper shame:
"Oh what is virtue, but an empty name!"[1]
Presumptuous thoughts! may these no more pretend
To blast a name they can not comprehend!
This gloomy stage on which our lot is cast
Is not a drama that will always last.

[1] I hope I need not tell the reader that these lines are only an objection commonly brought against Providence; which is, I think, afterward fully answered. As for the exclamation, *What is virtue, etc.*, it is a common saying among the ancient heathens, and is ascribed to several authors; — though I think the most fix it upon Hercules, as extorted from him, when frying and raving on Mount Œta, by the extremity of his pain; which if true, he is far from being so heroical as he is represented, since it is not killing of bulls and bears, and robbers, but inflexible virtue, patience, a magnanimity under the worst of evils, that make a true hero. However, as one of our own writers pleasantly observes, it is most likely to be his expression, because it looks so much like the speech of a mad man.

The Life of Christ

The way of Heaven, so exquisitely laid,
Reveals but part, and wraps that part in shade.
Worlds unexplored must first become our guide,
Before our reason fully can decide.
On views of sense our erring fancies stray,
Nor look through darkness into future day.
Hence folly leads us, when our gaze is o'er,
To fix our tents on this terrestrial shore.
But when the prospect in full bloom appears
Beyond the circle of revolving years,
We see that virtue was not made in vain,
However some may suffer or complain.
Who would not then resign short joys, to find
An endless train of happiness behind?

But flesh and blood, still discontented, mourn,
And impious murmurs in full tide return.
They ask, if all this earthly Paradise
Was formed to gratify and pamper vice?
If honor would not well on good men wear;
And look as decently, and sit as fair,
As on the vicious brow? Be this confessed:
But virtue is not constantly oppressed.
Eclipses serve to make her shine more bright,
And dress her charms in mingled shade and light.
Should all this fail, there needs but one reply
To pensive spirits — "Did not Jesus die?"
Jesus, in whom were admirably joined
The purest virtues, and the noblest mind,
The greatest merit and the greatest pain,
And tend'rest love repelled with worst disdain.

The Life of Christ

Though acts of mercy all his life displayed
Toward the sick, the healthful, and the dead;
Though all mankind did so profusely share
The Maker's bounty, and the Saviour's care,
The throng, ungrateful for the gifts bestowed,
Pursued his life, and crucified their GOD.
Unequaled merit, virtue too sublime,
And spotless innocence, was all his crime.
Fame, deathless fame, where'er he went, pursued,
Through every desert, wilderness, and wood.
How oft has he with disproportioned bread
The wond'ring crowd miraculously fed;
Who would have sunk him to an earthly crown
Whom all the bright ethereal kingdoms own,
If he had not performed one wonder more,
To shun their kindness, as their rage before;
And, veiled in clouds too thick for piercing day,
Glided unseen in secret shades away.

But when the melancholy hour was come,
And Heaven resolved to call its Lieger home,
See where the Judge of men and angels stands
Before those wretches who confine his hands;
Who, like a culprit, to the pillar bind,
And basely scourge the Saviour of mankind.
The giddy crowd in that tumultuous tide—
That crowd which lately loud hosannahs cried,—
Now cause their voices to ascend the sky,
And in mad concert utter—"Crucify."
On this occasion each his rage expressed,
And used exertions to surpass the rest.

The sick in accents dissonant and slow,
And children lately taught to speak and go;
The softer sex, wild youth, and hoary age,
And manly strength, in this vile cause engage;
The same their malice, and the same their cries;
The same wild fury, sparkling in their eyes,
Expels soft pity; mischief fills its place,
And murd'rous forms seize each distorted face,
Wild foaming rage, black malice, hatred fell;
And grinning envy, best-belov'd of hell.
Like furious beasts, themselves and earth they tear,
And scatter dust, loud bellowing in the air.
The real fiends, in mortal figures dressed,
In close disguise among the rabble pressed:
Their mien, their actions, and their rage the same,
Discovered no distinction but in name.
These soon perceived that all their work was done,
Nor wanted those their aid to urge them on;
The bloody priests their hellish arts supply,
And plan those schemes by which our Lord should die.

The sun had scarcely warmed our upper skies
Before the rout (so early rage can rise!)
With imprecations in their morning breath,
Thirsted for blood, and clamored for his death.
To Pilate's gate the Son of God they led,*
That law, perverted, might pronounce him dead.
There, with loud shouts, the vast pretorium shakes,
And soon the frightened governor awakes.
He calls his guards, and a centurion sent

* Matt. xxvii. 2; Mark xv. 1; Luke xxiii; John xviii. 28.

To learn what the unusual tumult meant.
Amidst a num'rous crowd, with staves and swords,
And fury armed, he heard no other words
But "Justice, Justice, let the impostor die;
Justice, Rebellion, Treason, Blasphemy."
The judge descends, and bids his sergeants call
His loud accusers to the judgment-hall;
They durst not move a step — religious fear
Forbade, because the passover was near.
Wretches! who strain at gnats, at murder smile,
Imagine guiltless blood will not defile!
These whited walls, thus fixed at Pilate's gate,
Preserved their ancient dignity and state.
Not they on him, but he on them must wait,
To hear their tales, and speak the voice of fate.
On his approach, he saw with much surprise
The guiltless Hero doomed a sacrifice;
He saw the captive; but amidst disgrace,
Some beams of glory dignified his face.
The Roman trembled, though unused to fear;
His heart presaged that more than man was near.
Unmoved he could not his great prisoner see,
But seemed far more a criminal than he.
But while without the priests and rabble stay,
Christ to the hall the Roman guards convey;
There Pilate asks, but not with stern command,
"Art thou the destined King of Israel's land;
The promised Prince, by each prophetic sage
Foretold, to usher in the golden age?
For we have heard, though from your light removed,
His future fame, and, undissembling, loved.

Of his high deeds Cumean grottoes rung,
And Maro's muse has his great plaudits sung.[2]
To whom our Lord: "The Romans need not fear,
Nor Jews suspect; my kingdom is not here.
All earthly power and glory I disdain,
And only aim in pious hearts to reign;
Truth there to plant, and error to remove;
For this I left my Father's throne above
For an ungrateful world: this only, I
Proposed when born; for this, contented die.'

Pilate amazed, returning to the gate,
Where all confused the furious rabble wait,
Heard all their voices for destruction call,
Alike enraged, the vulgar great and small.
Unmoved and firm the governor remained,
And asked of what so loudly they complained!

---

[2] That there was really some *bottom* in those which are called the Sibylline oracles, relating to our Saviour, I see no room for any modest man to doubt; though it seems on the other side a clear case, that vast heaps of doggerel Greek have been forged in their imitation, like those bastard medals so common in the world. The Christians could not feign that of Tully, which I think he applies to King Ptolemy, of a king to come out of the Eastern countries; any more than several passages of Virgil's Sicelides Musæ, which seem plain transcripts of what the old Prophets have left recorded concerning our Saviour which, though it should be granted, he might apply to the son of Pollio; yet there is but little doubt but that he had them from the Sibyls, or some tradition then current among the heathens; though he, too, as well as Balaam, might be acted beyond himself; for, in my judgment, he does here majora cancere, *sing of greater things*, as he has promised; nothing being comparable to it in all his works, not excepting the prophecy of Marcellus, or if there be anything finer in his beautiful Æneids.

What crime so high, the prisoner could alone
By such a death his mighty guilt atone?
Since all their tumults no discoveries made,
Nor had his answers any guilt betrayed;
Nor must the guiltless be by noise oppressed,
—"Let one accuse—be silent all the rest."

He said; when straight, advancing from the crowd,
In haughty pomp came Caiaphas the proud;
Supplying want of reason, truth, and sense,
With a firm brow and pompous eloquence;
And thus began: "We highly are content
To plead our cause, illustrious president,
At thy tribunal; since we can not fear
To find that justice which is always here.
No venial crime so great a concourse draws
Against this wretch who would subvert our laws,
Unhinge our state, our temple overturn,
And in unhallowed fire our altars burn.
Since then imperial Rome consents to grant
Whatever prudence may demand or want;
To let her sons and conquered nations use
Their own religious rites; and since the Jews
Unanimous and loud for justice cry,
And all demand that this blasphemer die,
As he deserves; we can not once suspect
Great Pontius will our joint desires neglect.
Then let him die, whose infamous design
Is, by the world to be esteemed divine.
Let the impostor die; we ask it all;
Nor can our altars stand unless he fall."

He said ; th' applauding people gave consent,
And with loud shouts the wide Pretorium rent.
But Pilate, firm, perceived that envious rage
Led them against his pris'ner to engage;
For he had long remarked Christ's sacred law,
And spotless life, nor aught offensive saw—
Aught that the Roman jealousy could move;
His life was goodness, and his law was love.

Patient and meek th' expecting victim lies,
As lambs when bound appear for sacrifice.
His voice unheard, no loud complaints expressed
To ease the inward anguish of his breast,
No murmuring words, or sounds of discontent,
But all resigned, he to the altar went.
Nor was their fire the more by this allayed;
His silent meekness did their rage upbraid.
With their hoarse voices they assail the sky,
"Let that curs'd Galilean rebel die.
Through all the land he wild sedition sows,
Which, spreading wide, a dreadful harvest shows
In these remote rebellious fields." "Is he,"
Pilate abruptly asks, "of Galilee?
Know then that this your celebrated feast
Has to the city brought a royal guest,
Herod himself; we must not interfere;
To him my guards the criminal shall bear;
You, fathers, follow and accuse him there."
The mob retiring, half refuse to stay
For forms of law, and curse this dull delay.

Herod, with joy, the Saviour bound received,[3]
And longed to witness what he disbelieved;
Hoped to indulge his curiosity;
Some mighty work or glorious sign to see,
By the great prophet wrought; but asked in vain,
His birth, his life, his mission, and his reign;
How his authority from Heaven he proved;
What crime the citizens against him moved?
Christ silent stood. Not so the barbarous crowd,
Who urge their suit with clamors fierce and loud.
Him, with rebellion, they in concert charge,
And crimes too heinous, open, and too large
For proof or plea. Still calm his looks and mind,
To his Almighty Father's will resigned;
His eyes were fixed on a superior throne,
And in that court he pleads his cause alone.

"Is this the man," the tyrant cries with scorn,
"Whom fame reports to be our rival born?
Unlikely he to overturn a state,
Below our vengeance and beneath our hate.
Send Heaven no greater foe! Guards, quickly bring
Our royal robes to deck this doubtful king."
Herod's commands they readily obeyed.
And Christ with speed in royal robes arrayed;
Then mock, despise, before him bend the knee.
And back to Pilate guard his majesty.
The Roman found his stratagem in vain;
The fatal work recurs to him again.

[3] This Herod was grandson to Herod the Great.

The people throng the gates, and threatening ask,
Or rather urge him, to resume the task.
All arts he tries, persuasion, flattery, fear;
Now this, now that; now kind, and then severe;
But all in vain. One method more remained:
But all his efforts no advantage gained:
'T was usual with the Roman clemency,
On days like this to set some prisoner free,
And grace their festal joys. It happened then,
That one, alike abhorred by God and men,
A sturdy rebel of notorious fame,
By murder marked, Barabbas was his name,
Secured by justice, did in durance wait
The awful hour of his approaching fate.
Pilate this wretch presented to the Jews,
And with him Christ, — to know whom they would
choose;
Since one, whose crimes admitted no defense,
Conferred new light on spotless innocence.
The one was peaceable, and mild, and good;
The other factious, and defiled with blood.

In the strange combat which this contrast made,
Triumphant virtue all her charms displayed.
Justice and pity with the throng prevail,
And priests and elders saw their malice fail.
New charges now among the mob they threw,
And, ever subtle, mingling false with true,
Asked them "if those who wickedly contrive
To wreck their temple, they would save alive?
If 't were not height of madness to prefer

A black blasphemer to a murderer?"
By these and hell inspired, they louder cry,
"No, let Barabbas live, and Jesus die."
The governor again with anger moved,
Demands what actions all their hosts had proved,
Which could affect his life? While thus they strive,
They to destroy, and he to save alive,
A lady, of an ancient house and name,[4]
Unblemished virtue, and unspotted fame,
To him with haste on the tribunal sent,
If not too late, the murder to prevent
Of one he knew so just and innocent.
For in a dreadful vision's mystic scene,
She saw some presage of portentous mien;
She saw the angry skies begin to lower;
She saw the clouds discharge a dreadful shower
Of fire and blood, which in large eddies flow
And carry ruin to the men below,
Who people some devoted city nigh;
And heard a voice proclaiming from the sky—
"Forsake this place, which to the sword is given,
Since blood for blood must meet the wrath of heaven."

This trembling Pontius heard, and labored more
To free his prisoner than he had before.
But all in vain; for now the waves run high,
And rocks and shores and obstacles defy.
Led on by Annas, who had filled the chair

[4] Ecclesiastical history tells us that she was a noble Roman, her name Procula; afterward a convert to the Christian faith, and, as it is said, a martyr also.

Where Moses sat, and did the ephod wear,
The noisy mob once more renewed the strife,
And boldly clamored for the Saviour's life;
While Annas, bent to stimulate the gang,
Accosted Pilate with this keen harangue:—

"Shall a weak woman's dreaming fears prevail;
Her sentence stand, and law and justice fail?
Does Rome rule thus? or can that Prefect be
Her friend, who saves her greatest enemy;
Who spares the wretch whom we to justice bring,
Whom factious crowds so oft have hailed their king?
For this was Cæsar's Prefect hither sent?
Did he for this obtain the government?
Can he thus favor rebels, yet pretend
To rule his province, and be Cæsar's friend?
Let such base traitors whom they will enthrone;
All other kings but Cæsar we disown."
Shocked by this last attack, though firm before,
The wavering Roman would oppose no more;
But sunk overwhelmed in the impetuous flood,
And washed, to rid himself of guiltless blood.

Thus, when fair Jordan's streams their banks o'er-
flow
With rising waters or descending snow,
The painful husbandman with fruitless toil
Repels their inroads, and protects his soil,
Does to their fury banks and dams oppose:
The angry stream thus checked still wilder grows;
Then over all at last resistless pours,

And in a moment all his hopes devours;
While he for life to some near hillock flies,
And to the river turns his weeping eyes;
Sees all his stock destroyed in one short day,
Sees all his envied riches washed away;
And beasts, and men, and floating stacks of corn,
And house and household down the current borne.

Thus Pilate strove; nor longer would engage,
With hopes of conquest, their impetuous rage;
But in his judgment more correct than brave,
Thus basely honored what he would not save: —

"I find it unavailing to deny
Your base demand: the innocent must die;
But know, a speedy vengeance will pursue,
And may it light with all its weight on you.
I wash my hands of this tremendous guilt;
Bear you his blood, by you unjustly spilt."
They quickly answer, "We are all content
To bear the blood, the guilt, the punishment;
We and our children." Wretched men, you shall,
When your proud towers and boasted temple fall
Beneath their weight; when justice all divine,
Still sure, though slow, shall perfect Heaven's design;
When you and all who enter at your gates,
Shall swell the carnage which defiles your streets;
When streams of blood shall through your city flow
Faster than Kidron in the vale below;
Full o'er the torrent will destruction stride,
And death sit crowned upon the crimson tide.

Nor, wretches! can your deepest suff'rings pay
For half the crimes of this unhappy day.
Whither, ye traitors, whither will ye bring
Your Sovereign Lord, your Saviour, and your King;
How many wounds, how many deaths provide?
See where his hands are to the pillar tied
By the rough soldiers. See, at what they do,
The marble seems to weep for him and you.
Behold those furrows on his shoulders ploughed;
What drops, what rivulets, what streams of blood!
Hark! through the hall repeated strokes resound
To work our cure, while him they deeply wound—
While he with patience all his suff'rings bears,
And melts or tires his executioners.
O King of Heaven, thy guiltless offspring spare,
Nor once inflict what only God can bear!
Had we not better suffer endless pain
Than Christ these woes? O break the cursed chain;
Like Samson, snap those cords his arms disgrace,
And scatter vengeance through the faithless race;
Let rays of lightning guard his sacred head,
Or bolts of thunder strike these wretches dead.

Ah, no! too well he knew the price he gave:
Not him their death, but his the world must save.
And could our woes so far thy pity move?
How great thy pity, and how strong thy love!
Thy stronger mercy, justice stern obeys;
Pity thy power, and love thy vengeance sways.
This hast thou done to gain thy rebels grace;
Yet much remains of thy horrific race,

Scourged, mocked, and crowned with thorns, which
pierced and tore
His sacred head, and drenched his limbs in gore:
A reed these rebels for a sceptre bring,
And in mock robes insult, and hail him king.

Though tired with insults, which the Saviour bore,
The bloody priests still hunted after more;
Infernal rage filled each ferocious breast,
And stole the remnants of their savage rest.
Their barbarous spirits which demanded blood,
Soon spread contagion through the vulgar crowd;
The furious rabble would no longer stay,
But their mock sovereign drag to death away.
The soldiers then the fatal cross prepare,
Which Christ, though wounded, they compel to bear;
Who sinks, and faints, beneath the cursèd load,
Through past fatigue, and wounds, and loss of blood.
Nor was the tree on our behalf refused,
Nor yet that death, for slaves and villains used.[5]
Exhausted nature sinks as they convey
Christ to more pains, along the doleful way;
Where, with that blood which still remained behind,
He made an expiation for mankind.

It happened thus: while Christ, beneath the load,
Crushed to the earth, lay panting on the road,—
That perjured Judas, restless, thither strayed,—

[5] Tacitus calls it *servile supplicium*, a servile sort of punishment, not to be inflicted on any Roman citizen; and therefore we find in history that St. Paul, who was a Roman, had the benefit of that liberty, and was beheaded; while St. Peter, a Jew, was crucified.

The wretch who basely had his Lord betrayed,—
By chance, or rather by those furies sent,
Which first mankind delude, and then torment.
He saw the people's madness, heard their cry,
Beheld his Master bound, and doomed to die.
Now racking thoughts his guilty soul pursue,
And what was done direct him to undo.
Now all too late! What pains reflection brings,
What wounds, what deaths, what vultures, racks, and stings!
Hurried by these, he to the Elders goes,
And at their feet the fatal silver throws: *
"Retake the price of blood," he wildly said,
"For which my guiltless Saviour I betrayed;
Now mine no more. Alas! these bitter stings
Create remorse which all my vitals wrings.
Behold, he dies, the innocent and good;
My guilty soul betrayed his guiltless blood.
O cursed merchants, O detested gold,
O wretched priests, to buy what Judas sold!
New horrors rise when I repeat his name,
And hell must ease me with its hottest flame."

The priests with smiles this cold reply afford:—
"A worthless servant suits a worthless lord;
Whom if he thinks he wrongfully betrayed,
Look he to that—his price was justly paid."
Iscariot heard, and blindly rushes where
His guilty conscience goads him to despair.
To Heaven he durst not look; his heinous sin

* Matt. xxvii. 5.

Had clouded that, and hell burnt hot within.
With eyes all glaring he surveyed the ground,
And looked with horror on the skies around;
Beheld the light, and cursed it as it shone,
And in these strains addressed the rising sun,
Which seemed to shudder at the awful sight,
And blushed upon him with his angry light: —

"Perish forever, O thou hated light,
And sink like me in everlasting night!
Why dost thou yet thy beauteous beams afford
To that curs'd city where I sold my Lord,
My injured Lord! and now lament in vain
That God and conscience were exchanged for gain —
That God whom conscience taught me to esteem;
'T was there myself I damned, and murdered Him.
O whither shall a wretch so guilty run?
I plunge in hell, the hell I feel to shun.
My load of torment to escape, shall I
To my betrayed, my injured Master fly,
Fall at his feet, and for, and with him die?
Perhaps to pity he may still incline;
He must be touched with miseries like mine.
O hasten, Judas; go without delay;
He never yet a suppliant turned away,
Nor will he thee. No, faithless traitor, no,
The door is shut; thou must not, canst not go;
His beams of mercy Judas can not bear;
His hottest vengeance would be less severe.
A secret something says I must not live;
My guilt would haunt me, though my Lord forgive.

Shall I, alas, to distant regions go,
To quench this torment and divert my woe,
Through unknown seas, or tracts of burning sand,
Or snowy mountains which conceal the land—
Visit the southern or the northern pole,
Where winds can carry, or where waves can roll;
Where the ten tribes, vast seas and deserts crossed,
In climes unknown and heathen lands are lost?
Bear me with speed, some courteous whirlwind, bear
Where ease resides; I ask not how, or where.
But guilt, alas! would with its author go,
And banish quiet which he longs to know.
The image of my crimes would still pursue,
My whips, my racks, my plague, my hell renew—
Like Cain, a mark for every murderer made,
And closely haunted by my Master's shade.
His injured ghost beyond myself I fear;
Guard me, ye fiends, for 't is already here.
Bloody, yet pale, I see his open side;
O earth! the culprit in thy caverns hide;
And O, conceal within thy darkest room
A wretch that envies happier Dathan's doom.

"Wider, ye gentle furies; wider tear
This burning breast; let not your vipers spare
This tortured heart: these worms which never die,
My claims on vengeance can not satisfy;
I yet want more (in vain does Judas call
On Heaven or hell); they full and glutted crawl.
Yet still I breathe. O, why does vengeance spare
A hellish culprit who invokes despair?

Take me at once; but why this dull delay?
What hope or fear, yet makes me lingering stay?"
"*Die, traitor*," Demons whispered. "Die! but how?"
Iscariot asked; when straight a straggling bough,
Thrust from a blasted elder's trunk, he spied;[6]
On which with speed the fatal knot he tied;
Then clambering to the top despairing cried,
Upon the margin of the flaming tide,
"*Die, traitor, die*, the worst I then shall know,"
And headlong launches into flames below.
Ghastly in death his fiery eyeballs roll,
And laughing devils seize his parting soul.

Meanwhile the wicked rout his crimes pursue,
And what his treason left unfinished, do;
The Lord of life to cruel death convey,
Who as we saw, had fainted in the way.
While here a traveller from Cyrene came,
Obscure and friendless,—Simon was his name;*
With barbarous mercy him they forced to bear
The weighty cross. And a proportioned share
In every Christian's lot, as well as his,
—Through grief to joy—through pain they reach to bliss.

Among the myriads who his death attend,
Jesus, arriving near his journey's end,

[6] Some say it was a wild fig tree; it is no great matter which of the two. Surius says, "that the Jews have now a churchyard, or burying-place, on that very piece of ground; about the middle whereof, tradition tells them, this tree formerly stood."

* Matt. xxvii. 32; Mark xv. 21; Luke xxiii. 26.

Covered with blood, fair Salem's matrons see
Ascending to the top of Calvary.
His soul with grief, with stripes his body rent,
They see, and sigh, and all his woes lament.
Their tears and sighs to him were not unknown,
Who carries all our sorrows as his own.
"Keep, matrons, keep your briny tears," he cries;
"For your own sorrows keep those flowing eyes.
Weep for yourselves, and children yet more dear;
For now the day, the dreadful day is near,
By Heaven's just vengeance on your nation brought,
When barren wombs a blessing shall be thought;
When tender nature shall be thrown aside,
And savage hunger shall become your guide—
Urge you to seize without a single groan
Your infants' lives, to lengthen out your own;
When through your gates fierce hostile troops shall pour;
And what you leave, the greedy sword devour."

He said; and now with sweat, and blood, and pain,
The top of fatal Golgotha they gain;
A loathsome scene of murder and despair,
Fit for the tragedies transacting there;
With skulls, and bones, and putrid limbs o'erspread,
And all the gastly ruins of the dead.
Here disembowled bodies thrown around,
With nauseous gore had drenched the thirsty ground.
There half-torn carcasses unburied lay,
To each ill-omened bird a feast by day,
By night to howling wolves a welcome prey.

Th' accursèd wood now laid in order there,
The cross he lately bore, must Jesus bear.
His humble robes from his fresh wounds they draw,
And leave the stripes discolored, bruised, and raw;
His bloody clothes the soldiers then divide,
All but his vesture, which their lots decide.
This having done, they will no longer stay,
But straight the victim on the altar lay.
His spotless limbs they on the wood distend,
Which their huge spikes unmercifully rend;
His hands and feet, with many a sounding stroke,
Nailed to the timber, were deformed and broke;
So wide the wounds his tenderest muscles tore
That Jewish rage could find no room for more.
His mangled body fastened to the wood,
Which with the nails was now distained with blood,
The Roman soldiers lift erect in air,[7]

[7] I know many are of opinion that there was a sort of a Suppedaneum, a stay or footstool, on the cross, as a rest to the bodies of malefactors; but others, and I think the most, being of another mind, I had liberty of choosing which I pleased; especially, as the former opinion is grounded on a false supposition, that, without some such support as this, the body could not hang in the air, but would tear out the wounds by which it was fastened, and be borne down by its own weight: whereas, we are assured of the contrary, both by considering the strength of the muscles in those parts, and accidental examples of such as, falling from on high, have been caught by the hand, arm, etc., by some tenter, and remained a considerable time in that posture; and by the manner of that horrible punishment, at this time in use among the Turks and Moors, who throw condemned persons from a high tower stuck full of hooks and tenters, which, catching hold of the body in its fall, retain it there, where the poor wretches must hang till either the wound kills them, or they are starved to death. Now if the whole weight of a man's body (caught thus at disadvantage, with the fall besides considered)

And make the nails by perforations tear.
By these alone his injured limbs were stayed,
On these alone the sinking world was laid;
And while these nails sustain his hands and feet,
Justice and mercy kiss their points, and meet.

The Saviour thus transfixed, and raised on high,
With loud acclaim the rabble rend the sky.
Him, priests and people with lewd scoffs assail,
And thus exclaim — "Great king of Jewry, hail!"
(For on the cross, this title o'er his head,
As Pilate wrote, in various tongues was read)—
"Hail, wond'rous King! wilt thou not leave thy throne?
Descend from thence, thou shalt not reign alone;
To past exploits add but one wonder more,
And rescue him who raised the dead before!
So we our king we gladly will receive,
So the promised prophet yet believe."
All this and more our Saviour mildly bears,
And prays for mercy on his murderers.
More must thou feel, O boundless, suffering Love,
From the rude crowd below, and thieves above —
Those thieves, each mounted on his cursèd tree,
And groaning there, O how unlike to Thee!
Yet one some traits of modesty retains,[8]

can not tear itself off when thus hung in the air, how much less would it do so when supported behind, and fastened so evenly and proportionably by the most strong and muscular parts thereof? O what infinite love was manifested here by our adorable Lord!

[8] It is thought by many that this was no hardened villain, but newly entered on his trade. There is one passage in the history of

For keen contrition in his face remains;
Amidst his tortures he his guilt deplores,
And feels his crimes more pungent than his sores.
His fellow thief had greater progress made,
For crime with him had hardened into trade;
He seemed a villain of no mean degree,
Of standing fame and ancient pedigree.
He many years did robbery profess,
And had to science raised his wickedness—
Stood on his honor and his well-born race,
Nor by repentance would his name disgrace.
Stern gloomy guilt his countenance deformed,
And in their turns the angry passions stormed;
Thus all enraged he cursed both God and man,
And to our Saviour, grinning, thus began:—

"Hear'st thou their taunts, and canst thou all endure,
We tortured here, and they beneath secure?
Now, if thou canst, thy boasted powers display,

these thieves, which carries some difficulty in it. It is said in St. Matthew and St. Mark that the thieves (in the plural number) reviled our Saviour. But St. Luke gives the history as here related: that one did it, and the other rebuked him. Some say that both did it at first, but one repented, which is a probable solution; but I think there is a better — that it is a common elliptical way of speaking with the Hebrews. Thus Saul to David, 1 Sam. xviii. 21: "Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in the one of the twain." We render it undoubtedly according to the true sense; but it is in the original, by, or in the two; a plain instance of two used for one, as in the present case. So again: "it is written in the prophets," one of the prophets; and in other instances. The impenitent thief then reviled our Saviour; the penitent thief prayed to him, and no doubt was immediately happy with him.

And from these pains thyself and us convey.
Or is thy tale of Diety a boast,
And now detected, on the gibbet lost?
No power divine appears to ease thy pain;
Approaching death seems the Messiah's reign;
Thy present state unveils thy impious fraud;—
It shows the culprit, but conceals the God."

To him, the other from the distant side,
With shame, and decent blushes, thus replied:—
"Why nam'st thou God, whom yet thou dost not fear,
Whose steady vengeance overtakes us here?
Here for our crimes we justly bleed—but He,
Without our crimes, sustains more woes than we."
Then turning to our Lord his fainting head,
With tears of sorrow thus devoutly said:—
"O thou, who even upon the cross dost reign,
I ask not rescue from disgrace and pain;
These I deserve—but my petition is
That, when enthroned in everlasting bliss,
Thou wouldst remember my unworthy prayer;—
My guilty spirit, wandering in the air,
To Abraham's bosom let the angels bear."

To him, with love and pity in his eyes,
Our dying Lord amidst his pains replies:—
"Repentant soul, dismiss thy anxious fear,
I'll own thee there, since thou hast owned me here.
This happy day thy soul shall mount the skies,
And with thy Saviour reign in Paradise."

Amid these scenes malicious fame conveyed
The cruel tidings to the sacred maid;—
That, by false Judas, for unholy gold,
His honored Master had been basely sold;—
That her loved Son had been condemned to die,
And was by soldiers dragged to Calvary.
Ye tender mothers who her story read,
Guess what she thought, and felt, and did, and said!
For though resigned, yet nature would complain,
And utter groans from intellectual pain.
By grief behold the Virgin hurried on
To view once more and clasp her dying Son,
To soothe his pains, to wipe his bloody face,
And by partaking lessen his disgrace.

Thus Philomel repeats her mournful song,
When basely plundered of her tender young;
Does near the place where first she lost them, wait,
And, fluttering round the tree, lament their fate;
And, though of their recov'ry she despairs,
With loud complaints pursues the ravishers.
Thus the bless'd Maid on love's swift wings did fly
Through hostile ranks to fatal Calvary.

On her approach, the brutal guards in vain
Retard those steps which she repeats with pain.
Midst groves of swords the pious Virgin press'd,
And glittering halberts pointed at her breast.
So deep the wounds imprinted there before,
She could sustain and apprehend no more.
At length arriving near th' accursèd tree,

With shrieks of horror she exclaimed — "'T is He,"—
Then sunk to earth; nor could she longer bear
The dreadful sight which death presented there.
With cruel pity her the guards revive;
She wakes, and sighs to find herself alive.
To the dire tree her feet did swiftly run,
On whose tall top she saw her bleeding Son.
Now in wild grief the cross she does embrace,
And the dull stock press to her tortured face.
His blood descending mingled with her tears,
Which seemed less likely to be his than hers.
Paler than his her lovely visage stood,
Except those parts which had been dyed with blood.
In both their hearts the current seemed congealed,
And ebbing life in both had almost failed.
Christ on his cross beheld her woes, and mourned,
And felt new anguish as her bowels yearned; —
Felt soft affection through his torments move,
Nor even in death resigned his filial love.
His eyes depressed with pain, and dying head,
Once more he slowly raised, and thus he said: —

"Lament no more; let every thought be still,
Nor aim to thwart my Heavenly Father's will.
I, though removed, will for thy safety care,
And guard thy steps from every tempting snare.
My faithful friend, who, weeping near the cross,
Deeply deplores his own and Master's loss,
Shall be thy guide; confide in him, and see
In this my friend, a substitute for me."
He said, and turned from Mary and the rest

To that disciple, whom he thus addressed:—
"As thou in life my friendship didst partake,
Nor dost in death thy suffering Lord forsake,
Hear his request ere he resign his breath,
And sinks to stiffen in the arms of death:—
Behold thy mother, deem her always thine,
And yield to her that friendship which was mine;
Of our true friendship this dear pledge receive,
The last that thou canst take, or I can give."
He heard, assenting to his pleasing doom,
And from that hour removed her to his home.

The Virgin heard; and feeling all her loss,
Again knelt down close to the bloody cross;
Big swelled her heart, unable to lament,
Till tired nature gave her sorrow vent;
When thus she mourns: "Is this the kingdom given;
Is this the throne to bear the Heir of Heaven?
Must subjects thus their monarch entertain?
And is Messiah thus on earth to reign?
For this did God's great messenger descend?
For this the hymning heavenly host attend,
And hail thy birth with miracles? O why
Was this vain pomp for one condemned to die—
Die like the worst of men, of deaths the worst
On slaves inflicted, and pronounced accurs'd?
With joy, my Son, I could thy hearse attend,
Hadst thou in triumph made a glorious end;
At least the honor had the grief allayed,
For Israel's praises had thy wrongs repaid,
And made thee live again, hadst thou but broke,

Like Sampson, with thy death, the heathen yoke.
Too well, alas! too late the truth I see
Of aged Simeon's mystic prophecy.
Now through my wounded soul the poniards glide,
And wound the mother through her offspring's side.
Why is my grief so weak, or life so strong?
Why must I still these loathsome days prolong?
The strokes of sorrow are like lightning found
To blast the soul, but not the body wound.
O take a life your barbarous pity gives,
Let Mary die unless her offspring lives.
Or, ere his sands of fleeting life are run,
Join her in life or tortures to her Son;
She only aims to wipe his dying face,
Heave groan for groan, or perish in his place."

Thus Mary mourned, and some assuasives found,
While with her woes the hills and vales resound.
Her loud complaints the neighboring brooks combined,
Which in the melancholy chorus joined.
Nay, the mad crowd appeared convinced too late,
And idly mourned her lamentable fate.
Echoed the rocks, the senseless marbles moaned,
And at her pangs the Roman soldiers groaned.
Each seemed to weep, or blush, or sigh, or rave,
Or speechless gaze, or some assistance crave;
Their nerveless limbs deprived of motion stood,
And burning blushes tinged their tears with blood.

Meanwhile prodigious darkness clouds the day,
And frighted nature grieves as well as they.

The conscious Sun that could no longer bear
The shocking scene, forsook the widowed air;
Unnatural clouds obscure his radiant face
When at the midst of his diurnal race.
Th' amazed astronomer looks on in vain,[9]
Nor can the sight by all his art explain.
He saw the moon her sickly beams display,
In vain attempting to supply the day.
He saw effects from their own causes broke,
And thus to the alarmed spectators spoke:
"This knot I aim no longer to untie.
Nature herself, or nature's God must die."

From baleful caves, removed from joy and light
Out sallies primitive substantial night,
As black as that which once on Egypt fell,
And quite as full of demons sent from hell.
Unfriendly ghosts and shapeless forms appear,
And dismal shrieks and mournful sounds they hear;
Bellows the earth, in whose imprisoned womb
Pent whirlwinds fight, and rocking earthquakes come.
All nature trembles from some secret word,
And agonizes with her dying Lord.

But most the people of Judea's land,
Some of whom now their errors understand.
They knew to whom the prodigies were sent,
And felt what all these dire convulsions meant;
And now as loud to Heaven for mercy cry

[9] This is an anecdote sufficiently known, and commonly received and believed.

As late the rabble uttered "crucify."
Now maids and matrons in grave order go,
And youth and age their trembling bodies throw
Before the temple and its gates with grief,
And weary Heaven soliciting relief.
Here in distress they heave the general groan,
And mourn their country's ruin and their own.
But angry Heaven rejects their impious prayer,
Nor gives one mark that it designs to spare.
The altar shook, the ashes scattered lay,
The victim from the temple breaks away,
Or drops beneath the stroke and bellowing dies;
In lowering curls, the incense from the skies
Returns reluctant to the earth again,
Like clouds of smoke beneath descending rain.
Deep hollow groans from the foundation came;
From the high roof shot streaks of angry flame;
The solid pillars trembled, and inclined
Their lofty heads, as cedars in the wind.
Twice shook the rumbling earth, and thunders broke
In dreadful peals, succeeding stroke with stroke,
From the vast gulf; and the third dismal shock
With trebled rage disjoined the solid rock;[10]

[10] It is said the rocks rent, in general; therefore, as it should seem, more than one. Walker says, "*That* of Mount Calvary, whereon our Lord suffered, cleft asunder, some two or three feet, at the place where his cross was fastened, quite from one side of the hill to the other; to be seen at this day, gaping about a hand's breadth, and the depth of it not to be sounded." But the account that the Pilgrim gives of it is very particular, and in these words: "That what he saw of it was six feet and two fingers in length, and about two feet in breadth;" adding, "that it not only reached down as far as the chapel of Adam, which is in the hollow of the

Down to the trembling centre rent the veil,
Leaving exposed the sacred oracle.
The holy place, unveiled to vulgar eyes,
Naked and bare without a covering lies;
The golden lamps appeared extinguished quite,
Or only yielded an unnatural light;
This by fierce lightnings was more dreadful made,
And frightened priests ran trembling through the shade.

Meanwhile the Son of God expiring lay
Upon the summit of Mount Calvary.
A heavier weight than death his soul oppressed,
And tortured, worse than mortal pangs, his breast.
No more the beauteous rays of love divine
Or heavenly glories on his bosom shine;
It seemed all horrid like the earth below,
Which neither light nor comfort could bestow.
He raised his eyes which swam in death and night,
As dying lamps before they lose their light;
Then looked around for his attendant train,
But awful darkness made him look in vain.
His Heavenly Father could no more be seen,
For human crimes were placed too thick between.
He asks, as though forgetful of his state,
Crushed with the world's intolerable weight,
"Why, if compassion still resides with Thee,
MY GOD, MY GOD, HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?"

---

rock, but lower to the chapel of Invention of the Cross; its depth being unfathomable."

The Life of Christ

Christ, thus on earth permitted to complain,
Was heard in heaven by all the shining train.
Yet while dominions, hi'rarchies, and thrones,
Felt strange emotions at his dying groans,
Unmoved the Father heard his suffering Son,
Who by his sov'reign will the whole had done.

The glitt'ring hosts who chant their hymns above,
Enjoy with rapture, gaze, adore, and love.
Surveyed with pain what gave new feelings birth,
And frowned indignant on the guilty earth;—
Beheld the anguish of their God below,
And sympathized with his incarnate woe;—
Paused in their songs, their heavenly harps threw by,
Or only touched with plaintive harmony.
At length their music into silence turned,
And heavenly warmth in ruddy vengeance burned;
Like those fair strangers Lot conducted in,
Who punished guilty Sodom's brutish sin.
Among the rest a flaming Seraph saw
The vile transactions of the world below.
When trembling Sinai owned a present God,
And bent in homage to his awful nod,
He blew a trumpet there, and shook the earth,
And called strange feelings in mankind to birth.
Each stubborn rebel did his guilt confess;
It shook the mount, and shook the wilderness.
He knew his trumpet's powerful sound, and flies
Through worlds unknown and undiscovered skies;
Where once the signal was to battle given,
By Milton painted, "on the plains of heaven."

There with his might a powerful blast he blew,
Whose dreadful echo pierced all nature through;
Chaos disturbed in angry surges fell,
And terrified the Sanhedrim of hell;
While holy angels at the signal run,
And almost leave their God's commands undone.[11]

Uriel before had left the orb of day,[12]
And seen the planets in disorder stray;
Each wandering sphere stands still, or wildly rolls,
Nor yields obedience to the lawless poles.
A war in heaven appeared approaching nigh,
And Chaos threatened to invade the sky.
A call to arms through each battalion went,
And millions thronged the spacious firmament.
The gates unfolding a vast orbit make,
And adamantine rocks and pillars shake.
The pomp of battle gathered deep and wide,
And ranks of angels crowded side by side;
Cohorts and legions filled the plains of light,
And marched in state insufferably bright.
It happened then that Michael, standing guard,
Had God's own mount for his peculiar ward,
Where no confusion, noise, complaint, or cry,
Disturbs those joys which roll eternally;—

[11] I took the hint of this digression from Vida, softening one of his expressions by the word "*almost*."

[12] Milton makes Uriel the angel of the Sun; the name being very proper, signifying the light of God; which it might be in a sense, and yet that good Father's fancy be very agreeable, who called the Sun *Umbra Dei*, the shadow of God. I say he had before forsaken it, for an obvious (poetical) reason, because it was eclipsed.

None, since the angels fell. But when from far
He heard the horrid dissonance of war,
He seized his sword, unsheathed the shining blade,
Which seemed by some ethereal artist made;
Condensed his form to solid bulk and weight,[13]
And in a moment gathered all his might.
Some hoary spoils obtained in battles old
Adorned his arms, all horrid to behold.
His helmet scars and deathless trophies bore
Of ancient armor which the dragon wore;
Thus decked, among the foremost ranks he flew,
Who easily their glorious leader knew;
As on a cloud, with thunder charged, he rode,
And seemed in vigor all things but a God.

When thus prepared, they only wait the word
To sally forth and aid their injured Lord;
The cursèd city into dust to tear,
Or scatter worlds through boundless fields of air.
But Heaven's dread Sovereign did their haste prevent,
And with a signal shook the firmament.
His word the kindlings of their rage repressed,
And peace infused into each warlike breast;
Then he, in vision, granted them to see

[13] According to the notion of the Platonists concerning the condensation of the Angelical Vehicle, so as to make it visible: which seems to have been believed by most of the Fathers, who make angels have a sort of bodies; as indeed they must have whenever they appear, and are sensible not only to our sight, but even to our grosser touch; as when they laid hold on the hand of Lot. But whatever they are, we know, for the comfort of every good man, that they are "all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14.

The great, unknown, tremendous mystery.
And now they find that 't was resolved on high
That Christ, the maker of the world, must die;—
That in the Triune council 't was decreed,
A sinless God for sinful man must bleed;
His injured Father's wrath atone and bear,
And rescue rebel mortals from despair,
Complete the number of the heavenly host,
And fill those seats apostate angels lost.

Silence profound all Heaven awhile possessed,
And awful wonder not to be expressed.
Their arms they drop, their harps again they try;
New songs are heard, and wonted harmony.

Sweet Muse, return, and hover on the wing,
Around thy bleeding, thy anointed King!
Go weep like Magdalene before he died,
And say, like her—"My Love is crucified."
Go bathe his wounds, as that repenting fair
Once bathed his feet, and wiped them with her hair.
For all the follies of thy youthful days,
Ignobly spent in mortal beauty's praise;
For robbing Jesus of his just esteem,
For all thy broken vows to Heaven and Him;
For all thy sloth, thy vanity and pride:
See what they cost, "*thy Love is crucified.*"

On yonder gibbet, as he bowed his head,
From his pale cheeks the lovely roses fled.
His languid lips survived their crimson hue,

And sanguine tears and sweat his limbs bedew;
Darkness his swimming eyes begins to cloud,
And all his visage was deformed with blood.
In numerous streams the globules trickled down
Amidst those thorns which his bless'd temples crown.
These to his mangled hands profusely flow,
And join those streams which gush from wounds below.
Their channels pleasure and advantage yield,
And clothe with verdure every neighboring field.
In rills like these, our Lord his life resigned,
And with his blood enriches lost mankind.

Hail, ye mysterious drops of precious gore!
Each of you singly worth a world, and more![14]
Your wondrous value estimate defies,
Nor can your pregnant sources want supplies.
Yet should they fail from whence these riches pour,
This greater wonder would amaze us more—
What knows no limits must in time decrease,
Endless must end, and infinite must cease!

The loss of blood, and sweat, his vitals dried,
When, sick with pains, "I thirst," the Saviour cried:
His voice, though faint, was clearly heard beneath
By those who mocked him in the pangs of death.

---

[14] The blood of him who is infinite, the blood of God, as it is called in the Scripture, Acts xx. 28 (which must be my excuse for that bold thought a little lower, *the God expires*),—this blood, I say, must have infinite merits, and therefore, extends beyond the value of any finite being.

For acid wine the scoffing soldiers run,
Which he receives, and tastes, and cries — " 'T is done."
His spotless soul with death no longer strives,
The God expires, and sinful man revives.
" Receive my soul, Almighty God! " he cried; [15]
Then, cold in death, he bowed his head, and died.

[15] Vida has done this incomparably well, and expressed almost as much in one line as I have done in two; who thus at the end of his fifth book *Supremumque unimum, poriens caput, exhalavit.*

Contents of the Tenth Book

AFTER a discourse on the pleasure of seeing Virtue triumphant notwithstanding all misfortunes, and an invocation of the blessed Spirit's assistance for the happy conclusion of the work, Joseph of Arimathea is introduced going to Pilate, and boldly begging the body of our Saviour; which being granted, he repairs to the cross, and takes it thence, after a soldier had pierced the side with a spear, blood and water flowing out of the wound; then bears it to his garden, and lays it in his own sepulchre, accompanied by the blessed Virgin and other friends. The triumphs among the devils at the death of our Saviour: Lucifer's speech on that occasion, ordering all the devils to repair to earth again, and repossess their oracles. While he is in the highest of his exultation, our Saviour enters hell with a guard of angels; on which all the devils fly at his sight, and sink into the burning lake. The third day, our Lord's soul and body being again united, and he rising from the grave, Mary Magdalene and other women go to the sepulchre to embalm him, but find him to be gone, and receive an account of his resurrection from a vision of angels, directing them to go and acquaint his disciples with the news. Mary Magdalene stays and sees our Saviour himself, who orders her on the same message; on which Peter and John run to the sepulchre, and find the body to be

gone; but, returning, can not gain belief of the rest till our Saviour himself appears among them, Thomas being then absent, and still incredulous. Soon after, two others, to whom our Lord discovered himself at Emmaus, come in, and relate their history; which Thomas not yet believing, Jesus himself appears, and, showing him his wounds, fully convinces him—ordering all the disciples to meet him at Tabor in Galilee; who going thither for that end, he first appears to them as they were fishing on the sea of Tiberias, where he tries Peter's faith, and foretells his martyrdom. Thence meeting many of his followers on Mount Tabor, he orders them all to Jerusalem, there to take his last farewell; where being arrived, he takes them out to Bethany; and, after his last discourse and promise to be with them to the end of the world, the heavenly host appear, and sing an anthem, being part of the 24th psalm, while our Saviour is ascending; who, just as he disappears from the disciples, orders two angels back to Mount Olivet, to comfort them with the promise of his return. The disciples thereupon return again with joy to Jerusalem.

From painting by Plockhorst.

MARY AND JOHN AT THE SEPULCHRE

The Life of Christ

BOOK X

O how refreshing is the glorious sight,
When virtue rises from distress and night!
When all her friends with exultation glow,
And truth and justice rule the world below!
What scenes on earth of sublunary bliss
Can furnish glory more sublime than this;—
To see meek virtue all her foes despise,
See tyrants fall, and pious heroes rise?
Soon, very soon, life's tempests will blow o'er,
And saints with shouts shall reach the happy shore.

O Thou, who from the dark tumultuous wave
Didst raise these worlds, thy servants hear and save!
Through devious life direct our feeble bark,
As once thou didst the weary wandering Ark!
Remove these clouds,—let all, serene and fair,
Resemble breezes of celestial air!
Let this last voyage no rude storms molest;
That, of our long-expected port possessed,
Our souls may anchor in eternal rest.

True night at length in the disordered skies
Prepared at her accustomed hour to rise;
But starts to see her task performed before

By deeper shades which spread the ether o'er.
Still high in air two gasping bodies stood,
Exposed and tortured on the cursèd wood;
These still survived; but from our Saviour's breast
His spotless soul had fled to endless rest.
Joseph, courageous, could no longer bear *
To leave in death his mangled relics there;
But, while far off his weeping friends retired,
Whose faith and courage with their Lord expired,
With Nicodemus, his prudential friend,
Consults; when both the fatal hill descend;
For on its top, contiguous to the cross,
These had perceived and mourned their common loss.
Hence, with designs congenial to their care,
Which no distress could stifle or impair,
With speed they hastened to great Pilate's ward,
To beg the body of their honored Lord; †
That with due honors they might now inter
His last remains in Joseph's sepulcher;
There, if their just request successful prove,
To pay their tributes of respect and love.
With pious haste they thus to Pilate ran,
To whom, undaunted, Joseph thus began: —

"Illustrious Roman, whom our nation's spite
First taught to act what would not bear the light;
As Pontius wishes to be still thought free,
And only passive in their cruelty,
Wishes through time to bear to distant lands

* John xix. 38–42. † Mark xv. 43.

His fame and deeds as spotless as his hands,
Grant that thy suppliants may receive restored
The dear remains of their departed Lord.
Nor will the priests, renewed in madness, rave,
Or urge their hatred to the silent grave.
Permit us then to take him from the wood,
To cleanse those wounds which lie concealed in blood;
Due honors pay, at his sad funeral mourn,
And sprinkle tears and incense round his urn."

Pilate, perplexed, invoked each pagan power,
And called on Jove whom heathen realms adore.
"Thou know'st," he cried, "with what ecstatic joy
I 'd him restore — how grieved did him destroy —
That life which, sacrificed to public spite,
Gave to the nations an auspicious light.
Take what remains, since life's short day is o'er,
And take my grief that I can give no more."

Their wishes granted, they no more desire,
But thank the judge, and instantly retire.
The hill, remounted, less abrupt appeared;
Nor mobs nor soldiers as they went they feared.
Cohorts in arms, and glittering helmets bright,
They saw, diffusing gleams of dazzling light.
At last they at the scene of death arrived,
Where new barbarities had been contrived;
There, as effects of popular rage, they found
Two mangled bodies bleeding on the ground; —
Death's tardy steps had urged them to invent
Beyond the cross another punishment.

The bodies, dying, were forbid to stay
To stamp dishonor on their Paschal day,
And mar their joys; and hence new arts they try,
And with new torments make them more than die.
With staves the soldiers crush their brittle bones,
And make the mountain echo strokes and groans;
While the poor wretches supplicate in vain
For some kind stab to ease their lingering pain.
Jesus before had his meek soul resigned,
And spared their cruelty: his head reclined
On his torn shoulder lay: enraged, they cried,
"The vile impostor has too mildly died."
The brutal guards such disappointment found,
That his dead body they resolve to wound.
A soldier, blind with fury, snatched a spear
(Death armed its point, and sat in triumph there),
And darted at his side, from whence a flood
Of limpid water issued, mixed with blood;*
These were distinct, as through thin crystal shine
The sparkling drops of Gaza's noble vine—
True types of those pure streams which always flow
From God's high throne, to bless the world below—
Those sacred pledges of our future bliss,
Those streams which glad his people's paradise.†

'Midst these transactions Joseph thither came,
And mounts the tree; for love despises shame:
Himself ascends, and from the fatal wood
Takes his dead Lord, surcharged with wounds and blood;
Then to his garden the sad relics bore,

* John xix. 34. † 1 John v. 6–8.

Where his disciples oft had met before;
Then near the tomb conveyed the precious load,
And dropped the mortal remnants of his God.

Immortal Angels, to his garden bring
The glories of our own eternal spring;
Let every flower that in fair Eden blooms,
To greet the senses with its rich perfumes,
Mixed with Engeddi's spice and Sharon's rose,
The dying Hero's funeral pomp compose.
And when your sweets are round his body spread,
By Jews dishonored both alive and dead,
May some kind drops from heavenly eyes descend,
And prove your fervor for the sinner's Friend.

But should you still refuse the aid we crave,
Nor breathe your sorrows round the Saviour's grave;
The Virgin mother can that office do
With as much love and tenderness as you.
On rugged rocks behold her seated there,
While her companions rend the yielding air
With bitter griefs; the hills repeat their moans,
And in rude concert lengthen out their groans.
She sits in silence; her exhausted eyes
Can weep no longer, having no supplies.
For though no pangs announced his earliest breath,[1]
She found them more than doubled at his death.
In her cold arms his lifeless body lies,

[1] So it was generally conceived and believed by most of the ancients; which is enough to vindicate the propriety of the expression.

Death's iron slumber seals his languid eyes;
Though these were closed, his wounds lay gasping wide,
Those wounds which rent his feet, his hands, his side.
She kisses these, while her companions tear,
With loud complaints, their garments and their hair.
This vast excess the men with pain restrained,
Who could not their own lawless tears command;
Then to his corpse the last due honors pay,
Which to the vault they tardily convey;
Then, on approaching night, forsake the tomb,
And move toward their melancholy home.

Nature, meanwhile, a general grief expressed,
And all her family in mourning dressed;
The whispering gales in mournful sighs complained,
As though the fiends had every purpose gained.
Nay, heaven appeared the common woes to share,
And sorrows murmured through celestial air.
Hell now alone disclosed the least delight,
Our woe their joy, our shades their clearest light.
Such general revels there were only known,
When Satan made this new-formed world his own.
The Pandemonium[2] fills; the iron gate
Is thronged with many a gloomy potentate;
Blasphemous Moloch, Satan, Belial, Baal,
And lustful Asmodai: part go, part crawl
In folds of serpents, as when they fell.[3]

[2] Every one that has read Milton, may remember that it is his word.

[3] See Milton's admirable description of the devils turning into serpents, in his "Paradise Lost."

They now assume the ugly forms of hell.
High in the midst dire Lucifer ascends
His glowing throne: a frightful guard of fiends
Flock round his standard; since of those who fell,
The basest spirits guard the prince of hell.
He, some faint signs of what he was, retained;
A few weak rays of gloomy light remained.
His glimmering form a dusky twilight made
Amid the horror of th' infernal shade.
His power, still mighty, is by Heaven confined,
And strong eternal chains the rebel bind.
Were he let loose, and no new thunder hurled,
His arm to atoms would reduce the world.
Though chained by God, his haughty eyes express
Imperious vice, majestic wickedness;
Great, but not good, as earthly tyrants are,
Who hell's black brand, not Heaven's bright image, wear.
Servile, imperious, arrogant, and base,
A wicked joy glares in his dusky face;
Transports of vice a pause from pain impart,
And show some latent mischiefs in his heart.
Thus persecutors, his unfeigned allies,
Who still maintain his war against the skies,
Hoary in guilt, with blood and murder crowned,
Their black destroyers anxious wait around,
With hellish rage vowing at every breath
To scatter mischief and the darts of death.
Thus hell's proud potentate in flames arrayed,
Who having all his dreary world surveyed,
And viewed his strong dominion over man
And recent conquest, this harangue began: —

"Angels, dominions, hi'rarchies, and powers,
Possessors once of Heaven's imperial towers;
Ye bold assailers of the tyrant's throne,
Which fate if friendly should have made our own;
(But though it frowned, and us with frowns pursued,
Angelic valor still is unsubdued);
Full well ye know, nor need we blush to own
The splendid conquests which we since have won.
That sordid piece of animated clay,
Controlled by laws, and destined to obey,
For whom the beauteous world above was made,
A heaven to this uncomfortable shade,
We by an easy stratagem betrayed,
And all creation in disorder laid.
Those arts the tyrant's workmanship deface,
Which in one moment murdered Adam's race.
Mercy indeed they had, while we had none,
Who scorned, like man, to kneel and lick his throne.
With nobler views these legions took the field,
Who conquered worlds, but never learned to yield.
Unnumbered myriads bend beneath our sway,
Perform our rites, and our commands obey;
Pay ready homage to our nether throne,
And Satan's empire and dominion own.
How small the remnant that his shrines adore!
We rally millions, and have millions more;
More priests, more oracles; nay, even there,
In his own land, we have the greatest share.
You saw his kings to us for counsel come,
And Endor spoke when Shilo's voice was dumb.
'Tis true, some dreaming prophecies foretell,

In many a mystic type and oracle,
That man, though ruined, shall again arise,
By some strange prince descending from the skies
In human form. Was ours too mean and base?
May curses reach him and his sordid race!
He comes, it seems, to seal our final doom,
And rescue mortals from the silent tomb;
From our domains compel us to retire,
To spend eternity in beds of fire;
Nay (though we smile such idle threats to hear),
To fix our destiny, and chain us here!

"Revolving deeply on their dark intent,
I soon explored the æra which was meant;
And when the late great Hebrew prophet came,
Whose birth, whose life, whose miracles, and fame
Have filled the world,—from whom our legions fled—
Whose powerful word awoke the trembling dead;
Chased stubborn maladies and strong disease;
Rebuked the winds, and stilled the raging seas;
Reformed the nations, and curtailed our state;—
Your monarch's heart half trembled for your fate.
This man, this prophet, deity, or all,
Whom Abraham's offspring the Messiah call,
With various arts and stratagems I tried,
With all the baits of vanity and pride,
All that the earth, or wealth, or pleasure yields,
From Afric's sands, or Europe's fertile fields;
Luxurious Asia's tempting charms were shown,[4]

[4] The pleasantness, and riches, and manners of those countries sufficiently warrant the epithet which I here give the Asiatics.

And all the hidden sweets of worlds unknown;
Whatever nature made of fair or good,—
But all in vain; inpregnable he stood.
Not so the wretch who friendship's visor wore,
(The Jewish Pontiff was our friend before),
Who from the world self-murdered hither came,
And writhes this moment in yon sea of flame;
He served our purpose; yet, like those above,
We hate the traitor, but the treason love.
But now the danger and our fears are o'er;
This mighty prince will drive our hosts no more.
I saw this king, this prince exposed on high;
The cross his throne; I saw this Saviour die!
For such his flatterers called him. Now they run;
And seek in shades a refuge from the sun!
When they eloped, and he abandoned them,
Revengeful Heaven on our Jerusalem
Looked down with anger; let its vengeance frown,
Our Conqueror now may mourn his conquered Son.
On all the world let Heaven its vengeance take;
Or what is past endeavor to unmake.
Meanwhile we smile to see its boasted power
Too feeble to recall one fleeting hour.
Then let its thunder the creation shake,
And plunge us deeper in our dreadful lake;
Yet here we revel, here suspend our grief,
And, though in torment, find some small relief.
Envy shall smile, and raise her hydra head,
And vice exult, whose greatest foe is dead.
Discord, oppression, cruelty, and wrong,
Which lately fled the magic of his tongue,

Shall with due speed their snaky trains prepare,
And all triumphant reign in earth and air;
There our exploits and recent conquests tell
To every foe, and friend, and oracle;
To all the demons that in ether rove,
From Delpho's rock to wise Dodona's grove.
Then these" — But here his speech abruptly ends,
And, all confused, he from his throne descends.
For at a distance, through his dismal cell,
He saw strange light which half illumined hell.
The gates wide bursting, Death in league with Sin
Shrieked, and disturbed the Sanhedrim within.
The Conqueror followed, who the blow had given,
And stood the glorious Potentate of Heaven:
Jesus the God; — a guard of angels stands,
And reddening thunders muttered in their hands.
His voice and looks the rebel fiends surprise,
While fiercer lighting darted from his eyes.
Too well his eyes, too well his arm, they knew;
For all had seen and felt their vigor too.
First did their trembling king the firm forsake,
And headlong plunged into the flaming lake.
With equal speed unnumbered legions run,
And seek new hells, the Lamb's fierce wrath to shun;
These fall at once, and, from the dreadful steep,
Enter the bosom of the boundless deep;
In liquid flame extensive circles make,
And raise strange billows in the brimstone lake.
Thus, from the margin of the Silver Po,
When watchful mallards spy their deadly foe,—
Perceive the eagle darting through the air,—

They mount their pinions, and retreat with fear;
And when they find him gaining on their rear,
Strike headlong through the stream, and disappear.

The fiends on earth perceive the fatal blow,
And strangely sympathize with those below;
And as of old from Heaven's high wall they fell,
So each with haste forsakes his oracle.
These, as autumnal leaves the valley spread
Ere shivering winter lifts his palsied head,
With lamentations urge their rapid flight,
And seek for refuge in the realms of night.
Thus does the woman's conquering offspring tread
In more than triumph on the serpent's head![5]

With him, sweet Muse, to earth again return,
Where his sad death his friends, mistaken, mourn:
They mourn him dead, who greatly lived before,
Who died for man, but lives to die no more.
His glorious body, active and refined,
Now moves in concert with his purest mind;
Alert and agile it in order stands,
And swift as thought obeys the soul's commands.
Like that it moves, and in a moment flies
From east to west, from earth to paradise.
His friends, alas! who yet lamenting were

[5] I confess that my own private judgment militates against what is here advanced concerning our Lord's descent into the infernal regions. But as many of the ancient fathers of the church were established in this sentiment, I have introduced it into the poem; and the candid reader is left to judge for himself.

In stupid sorrow and supine despair,
Forgot the promise of his sure return,
And without hope or consolation mourn.
Sad were the hours; no comfortable ray
They wore, and night increased the gloom of day.
With kinder omens the third morn appears,
The happy morning sent to dry their tears.
Thou solar star, thou radiant orb of day,
Propel thy light, and scourge the dull delay!
Another Sun dispels another night,
And glads the world with intellectual light;
And when his radiance reaches every shore,
The happy world will need thy rays no more.

Before the sun fair Magdalene arose,
Who to the tomb with aromatics goes;
Resolved to rescue from the putrid grave,
And fill with unguents, him she meant to save.
The same kind office also thither drew
Her female friends who her intention knew;
These met together: though their fears were strong,
Their love was stronger, and they walked along.
At length with various painful doubts they come,
And reach the garden which contained the tomb.
On their approach, an unexpected fear
Started at once, and much perplexed them here.
They recollected that a ponderous stone,
Beneath whose weight five times their strength would groan,
Had been procured, and, placed before the cave,
Secured the passage to their Saviour's grave;

And ere they reached it, each presumed to say—
"What powerful hand shall roll the stone away?"

The doubtful Jews, when Jesus was interred,
To mar predictions they had often heard,
Their recent actions from reproach to save,
And blast his credit in the silent grave,
(For guilt suspects) had placed a Roman guard
Around the sepulchre: with labor hard
They brought that ponderous stone which Christ immured,
And by a seal their whole design secured.
By this they aimed to ratify his doom,
And thus forbid him to escape the tomb.
For Christ had said, "The third auspicious day,
Life shall revive this uncorrupted clay."
They knew his word had others raised; nor yet
Could they the power which Lazarus felt, forget,
Or Nain's youth; nor were their fears in vain,
Nor longer Hades could his soul contain.
A conqueror thence he rose where late he fell,
And dragged in chains of truimph death and hell.

That hour arrived when nature must obey
Her sovereign Lord, he willed the stone away.[6]

[6] [The following note is by Dr. Coke.—Ed.] These are the words of Mr. S. Wesley. But I see no difficulty in supposing or believing that our Lord rose with his immortal spiritual body (see 1 Cor. xv. 44, 53, 54), without condescending to remove either the stone or the earth. He undoubtedly appeared suddenly to his disciples more than once in the upper room, when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews (John xx.), and vanished in a moment from their sight. The uncouth notion of some — that our Lord opened

Though round his tomb officious angels stayed,
Their rising Master wanted not their aid.
In silent Majesty his form ascends,
And in his triumphs the great contest ends.
The rising God let saints and angels sing.
Who tread the earth, or hover on the wing;
Who now in time pursue the heavenly road,
Or bask in bliss before the throne of God!
Thus does the sun his beaming glories bring;
Thus from dead winter mounts the cheerful spring.
Jesus is risen, who does the world restore:
Awake, ye dead; ye sinners, sleep no more.
Awake, ye careless, from enchantments deep,
And sleep no more, or else forever sleep!

The Saviour risen, his unrivaled care
Stationed two bright attendant angels there,
Those early pious pilgrims to console
Who with mistaken tears his loss condole.
Their trembling feet no sooner had they set*
Within the garden, than strange scenes they met.
The earth convulsed was trembling where he lay,
And frightened nature felt more pangs than they;
The yielding air some unknown powers divide,
And flitting forms seemed brushing by their side.
On their approach the guards celestial stand,
And with due honors range on either hand;

and shut the door, while the disciples were not aware of it, appears to me to convey a very low and mean idea. Mr. S. Wesley's opinion, however, requires that our Lord should not only will the stone away, but should also will it back again.

* Matt. xxviii. 1, etc.

As on the sight of earthly majesty
A lane is made till all the pomp goes by.
A heavenly youth before these women went,
Whose lovely presence heightened the event;
From the cave's mouth he rolls the mighty stone,
From whence before our conquering Lord was gone;
He rolls it, and triumphant sits thereon.
The Roman soldiers, foreigners to fear,
Sustained their stations till his form drew near;
Then made some effort to resist, and fain
To draw their swords they strove, but strove in vain;
Their foe was heavenly, and in vain they rear
Their useless piles, suspended in the air.[7]
Fear seized their souls, their hands disarmed they found,
And all their armor clanks against the ground;[8]
Their bodies trembled, and their courage fled,
And in some moments all appeared as dead.

The lovely Seraph with a calmer air *
Turned to the women to dispel their fear; †
Laid by his frowns, in mildest accents spoke,
And in these words the morning silence broke: ‡
"Why should you fear, since Heaven, with all its powers,
Guards whom you seek — your suffering Lord, and ours?

[7] Piles were a sort of heavy darts, or javelins, used by the Romans.

[8] I think it is Cowley's verse, in the fall of Nahash, when killed by Jonathan.

* Matt. xxviii. 5–7. † Mark xvi. 5–7. ‡ Luke xxiv. 5–7.

Why should you pierce this melancholy shade,
Or idly seek the living with the dead?
Dismiss your griefs, nor let these tears deplore
Your Saviour God, who lives to die no more.
Did not he promise the third day to rise?
Could Christ deceive? Advance, and trust your eyes!
See the cold cavern where he lay — see there
The linen clothes and empty sepulchre.
Convinced by these, with expedition go,
And to your friends the happy tidings show."

With joy and trembling the fair group retire,
Anxious to know, yet fearful to inquire.
Courageous Magdalene resolved to stay,
While to their friends the others haste away.
She, all intent her much-loved Lord to find,
Wanted his presence to console her mind —
Her mind, which struggling thoughts like earthquakes move,
Tortured at once with hope, and doubt, and love.
Angelic witness she could scarce receive;
The tidings seemed too glorious to believe.
With eyes half-closed, or fixed upon the ground,
With thoughts absorbed in subjects most profound,
She heard some sound, and saw a form appear,
Which she imagined was the gardener near.
She, as he came, suppressed the rising sigh,
And wiped the tear that started from her eye,
Then thus began — "If thou hast carried hence
The poor remains of murdered innocence,*

*John x. 15.

Tell me in pity where his limbs are laid,
For my last sighs and tears are yet unpaid.
There I" — The Saviour could no longer bear,
But in her pangs sustained an equal share;
Around his temples beamed some sacred rays,
And in his face she saw the Godhead blaze.
Her honored Lord she recognized and knew,
And at his feet herself in transports threw;
And, feeling joys too vast to be expressed,
"Master," she cried, and spoke in looks the rest.
Her Lord salutes her with his radiant eyes,
And adds in words — "Suspend thy ecstasies.
Go, tell my brethren that I hold them dear,
Though partly sunk in unbelief and fear;"
And having charged her this request to bear,
Glides from her sight in fields of trackless air.

When she arrived and told what she had seen,
All were incredulous as she had been;
They thought the vision by her fancy made,
Or conjured up by some delusive shade.
Yet quite alarmed with such uncommon news,
They half acknowledge what they half refuse;
And in this strait resolved to ascertain
A fact which none were able to explain.
John, while the others much attention lend,
Seemed most concerned, as Christ was most his friend.
Cephas stood next, who, rising from the fall,
In faith and courage seemed a spur to all:
Thus broken bones, by skillful artists dressed,
And set again, grow stronger than the rest.

From painting by Bouguereau.

EASTER MORNING.—CHRIST APPEARS TO MARY MAGDALENE

Warm zeal and friendship these disciples bear
In a few moments to the sepulchre.
On entering here they could no body find,
But saw the linen which was left behind,*
The spice with which the Jews embalm their dead,
And blood-stained napkin taken from his head;
Which in close folds was in a corner placed:
A work confessing neither fear nor haste.
On seeing these they could no longer mourn,
But both in triumph to the rest return.
They come with speed, but gained no credit here;
For all were filled with terror and despair.
A cloud of grief brought on a mental night,
Which left the whole without one gleam of light.
Their sun seemed set, which they in groans deplore,
Yea, set in death's dark shades to rise no more[9]
The doors were shut, lest the malicious Jews
Should the apostles, as their Lord, accuse
Of crimes unknown: hence all in silence were;
And sighs suppressed but gently moved the air:
Their only light, one taper's glimmering ray,
And this was hidden, lest it should betray.
Amidst this gloom, an unexpected sight
Appeared before them in a flood of light;
The form was human, but the air and dress,
And bright celestial light, the God confess.
He looked divinely, did divinely move;

* John xx. 5–7.

[9] So, it seems, they all thought; for it was a long time before they believed in the resurrection, though they had repeated and credible testimonies of it from eye-witnesses; much less can we suppose they did so, when it depended on faith only.

His voice was heavenly, breathing peace and love.
His wond'rous words, which life and light conveyed,
Resembling those by which the world was made;
Reviving vigor through their spirits sent,
And struck new gladness whereso'er they went.
He mildly chides their unbelief and fear,
And shows those wounds made by the nails and spear;
And their conviction fully to complete,
Of their provisions condescends to eat.*
Christ, having banished thus their doubts and fears,
Breathes peace into their souls, and disappears.

Thomas, it seems, through accident or fear,
Was at a distance when his Lord was there;
And missed those proofs which Jesus deigned to give,
That all his friends by seeing might believe;
But now, returning to rejoin the rest,
Heard all the pleasures of their souls expressed;
Heard them the words and acts of Christ explain,
His wounds describe; but heard the whole in vain.
Cephas with zeal proceeded to declare
The wond'rous facts which all attested there.
"Dismiss thy doubts," he cries; "he did appear;
These eyes beheld our common Saviour here;
To all assembled, if my sense be true,
He spoke as clearly as I speak to you,
All present saw and heard." — "You must forgive,"
Continued Thomas, "if I disbelieve.
It seems a doubtful" — While he thus replies,
In rushes Cleopas with new surprise;

*Luke xxiv. 43.

Haste sealed his lips, his eyes his heart betrayed,
And indicated what he quickly said:
His nimble feet his breath and voice outran;
He paused, recovered both, and thus began:
"The Saviour lives; on this auspicious day,
With this companion journeying on our way,
The Lord appeared;—thou canst the same attest;"
He said, and turned, appealing to his breast.
His friend, thus bidden, hastened to declare
A plain relation of the whole affair:—

"As tossed 'twixt lessening hope and growing fear*
And wearied out with scenes of sorrow here,
Which but revived our losses, we forsook
This guilty city, and a journey took
Up to Emmaus, which is known to all,
Seated beneath an easy mountain's fall.
When we drew nearer to the place designed,
Scarce half our little journey now behind;
Just at Ba'al-Perazin we could descry
The little house of aged Zachary,
The Baptist's happy sire: when this was seen,
Reflection brought a train of sorrow in.
The attestation this great prophet gave
To our great Lord by Jordan's sacred wave,
The fate of each upon our minds impressed;—
You knew their virtues, and you know the rest.
Both just and good, and innocent in vain,
By Herod that, and this by Pilate slain.
With various talk beguiling the ascent,

* Luke xxiv. 13–35.

Sometimes in tears; as up the hill we went,
An unknown stranger joined us, who we guessed
To be some convert coming from the feast.
On his approach we strove to dry our eyes,
But faster still new stubborn streams arise.
The stranger saw, and said—'It may be rude
In one like me by speaking to intrude
Upon your private thoughts; yet I perceive
Such proofs of anguish as can not deceive.
May I presume, amid this tide of woes,
To know the cause from whence your sorrow flows;
Since by partaking we divide and share
The common sufferings which the whole must bear?'

"Struck with his courtesy, my friend replies,
While gusts of sorrow stream from both our eyes:
'Art thou alone a stranger in this place,
And hast not known what things are come to pass?'
'What things?' he said. We answered, 'Can it be,—
Hast thou not heard of Jewish cruelty?
How Christ, a prophet both in deed and word,
Whose life was wholly given to the Lord,
Has, by our rulers, been condemned to death,
And on the fatal cross deprived of breath?
By Christ such signs were to the people shown,
That in no corner is his name unknown
Throughout the country. Such great deeds before
No man performed, and hence we thought him more,
Thought him the wondrous promised Prince foretold
In all the holy oracles of old—
The great Messiah,—the bestowed of God

To bruise the nations with an iron rod.
We trusted he, whose death we now deplore,
Would have redeemed us from oppressive power.
But, if deceived, Israel will never find
A prince more just, to nobler deeds inclined,
More mild, and merciful, and kind, and good,
With half his virtues and his grace endued.
But ah! by our deceiving hopes misled,
We saw his exit, and lament him dead.
Some faint traditions, while he was alive,
Spoke of his death, but said he would revive:
Hence hope, fond hope, exerting all her power,
Hangs o'er his tomb, and waits the destined hour;
But fear intruding, with her haggard train,
Wars with our views, and darkens all the scene.
Besides all this, to consummate our grief,
And murder every prospect of relief,
This is the day to which our hopes were led,
But still we fear he lies among the dead.
'T is true, some women early in the morn
Went to the cave that had been made his urn;
They found him not; but felt their hopes revive,
Because some angels said he was alive.
Some others went, but found, what we deplore,
The body gone, but heard of nothing more.
Judge then our case.' The stranger seemed to hear,
And spoke with mildness that appeared severe: —

"'Mistaken men, you seem immersed in night,[10]
And sadly wander void of heavenly light.

[10] O fools, and slow of heart, etc., our Saviour calls them. Luke xxiv. 25.

Look on the prophecies for ages since,
Was not Messiah called a suffering Prince?
His birth, his life, his death, the prophets tell,
In many a mystic type and oracle.
Did not the Father previously ordain
His Son to suffer first, and then to reign?
Why else from faithful Abraham's bosom, why
Was his beloved Isaac drawn to die?
Why was he offered, too, near Calvary?[11]
What meant the Paschal Lamb, and wherefore dies
The sinless herd, a deadly sacrifice?
For what did Moses in the wilds prepare *
A brazen serpent, lifting it in air?
You know the case each wounded Jew received,
Who turned his half-closed eyes — he looked and lived.
The time would fail to trace the shadows o'er,

---

[11] Old tradition says, that Adam's skull or head was found about this mountain, whence some derive its name Golgotha. A little more probable it is, that it derives its name from its shape, being a round bare rock, at a distance appearing like a skull; or, at least, from the many unburied skulls and bones there found, this being the place of public execution. Now it is certain that Isaac was offered near, or on Calvary, for that itself is one of the mountains in the land of Moriah; and it was upon one of these that he was offered: and, perhaps, our Saviour was promised of old, to come, or appear, in that very place. For, whereas we render the Jehovah Jireh, in Gen. xxii. 14, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen;" it will bear another sense; "In the mount shall the Lord be seen" — this mount, either Mount Moriah, on which part of the city and temple were built, (Vid. Joseph.) and where our Lord, the true Jehovah, so frequently appeared; or on Mount Calvary itself, where this great antitype of Isaac was offered. See Coke's Commentary on Gen. xxii.

* Num. xxi. 8.

The wounds which David typically bore,—*
Unfold predictions in the Psalms and Law,
Or note those visions which Isaiah saw.†
You know *that* prophet speaks distinct and clear;
Scarce prophecies, but histories, you hear
When he is read: Now Jesse's noble stem,
And now the Prince, assumes his diadem.
His purple robes decipher but too plain,
Not Tyrian dyes, but dyes of nobler grain—
His sinless blood, abused, condemned, betrayed,
And for mankind a needful victim made:
In red apparel see the Hero come
From Bozra's rock, a bleeding conq'ror home.‡
Then should not Christ, as all these types portray,
First suffer death, then rise to glorious day?'

"While thus the stranger spoke, we ceased to mourn,
And with strange raptures felt our bosoms burn;
Without emotion saw the day descend,
And, ere we wished it, reached our journey's end.
We paused in silence as he took his leave,
And strongly felt inducements to believe;
And, quite unconscious of design or art,
Heard his farewell, but yet were loath to part.
Impressed with friendship, to induce his stay,
We urged and argued the decline of day;
Begged him to tarry at our country-seat,
Lodge as we lodged, and eat as we should eat.
He mildly grants: we entered and refreshed

*Ps. xxii. 16. † Isa. liii. ‡ Isa. lxiii. 1.

Our weary limbs with grateful food and rest.
The simple fare our village could afford
Directly spread the hospitable board:
The stranger then both blessed and broke the bread;
When in an instant the disguises fled;
The lambent glories round his temples shown,
And in a moment all our doubts were gone
Before our long-lost, dear lamented Lord,
Low at his feet we trembled and adored;
Expressed our bliss, our gratitude, and love;
And prayer and praises carried us above.
While prostrate thus, our Lord had scarcely heard
Our bursting raptures, when he disappeared.
We all, astonished, gazed upon the light,
But Christ himself had vanished from our sight;
And in that hour in which the Saviour went,
We left the place to tell you the event."

Thus happy souls, who seek by faith and prayer
Christ in the means, are sure to find him there:
Let prodigals and swine on husks be fed,
Jesus will still be known in breaking bread.

But these two friends in vain their wonders tell.
Thomas at least remains an infidel;
Argues and questions, why he never stayed,
But always vanished like a fleeting shade;
Declares that nothing shall remove his fear,
But demonstrations evident and clear.
"Unless," said he, "these eyes behold my Lord,
And from his lips these ears receive his word;—

Unless I see those wounds of which he died,
And with these fingers feel his hands and side,
I still shall think that all the proofs you give
Are mere delusion; and will not believe."

Thus having said, they with amaze behold
The room all deluged with ethereal gold;
Clear waves of glory gild the illumined air;
And while they gazed, they saw their Saviour there.
From all his wounds refulgent radiance flowed,
Strong and profuse as when they yielded blood.
All knelt, adoring; Thomas only stands,
To whom the Saviour stretched his wounded hands,*
And showed the nails' impressions, which abide
In glorious scars: Then turned his mangled side,
And said—"The utmost evidence receive,
And be no longer faithless, but believe."
Prone on the earth he hastens to adore,
And cries—"My Lord, my God!" and says no more.
The prostrate saint the Saviour gently raised,
And in soft words thus chid him while he praised:
"Thou from thy senses dost the truth receive;
But *those* are bless'd, who without sight believe."
Thus having said, he bade them all repair
With speed to Galilee, and meet him there
On Tabor's holy mount, where once their Lord
Had been before by heavenly hosts adored;
Then pledged his word, and promised to appear,
Impart advice, and show new wonders there;

* John xx. 27.

Describe the world in which his friends must dwell,
Confirm their faith, and take his last farewell.

In peace and joy they from the feast return
To meet their Lord, whom they no longer mourn;
Nor idly wait to be by wonders fed,—
With honest toil they earn their daily bread.[12]
It happened, on a dark but silent night,
That Peter his companions did invite
The heedless fish in flaxen toils to take,
Near to Tiberias, on the neighboring lake.
And, as his friends to join him gave consent,
All, near the city, on the water went.
The barren waves withheld their usual spoils,
And fruitless labor closed all their toils.*
But when the morn their vain pursuits exposed,
Its opening light upon the shore disclosed
A man of stature, gesture, face, and dress,

[12] The apostles were not yet sent abroad to convert the world, as they were after the descent of the Holy Ghost, and so kept to their old employments; but when they left those to undertake more eminently the cure of souls, heavy enough of itself without any additional weight, then we do not find St. Peter a fishing any more, unless, as our Saviour said, to catch men; and St. Paul tells the Corinthians that the Lord himself had ordained that those who preached the gospel should live by the gospel. St. Paul indeed, in some peculiar circumstances, was an exception. But here I would by no means be thought to speak against the use of any talents which God has given us. I consider the local ministers and preachers in our United Kingdom as men of great, and, under God, of essential importance to the progress of the work of salvation. I would only intimate that those who are blessed with gifts and talents sufficient for the full ministry of the word, should entirely devote themselves to that sacred duty.

* John xxi. 3.

Unknown,— who hails, and asks them what success
The night had brought. "Extremely bad," they said;
For all their prospects of success had fled.
He then inquired which side their net had lain?
Where they had labored with such fruitless pain?
Then asked again, what methods they had tried?
And bade them drop it on the other side,
Adding,— "With certainty a shoal remains
To meet your views, and recompense your pains."
His kind advice the men adopting, caught,
As once before, a most amazing draught.
Their utmost strength united wanted more
To lift their net, or drag their prey on shore.
But by their boat their finny prize they towed,
Which seemed oppressed, while fastened to the load.
When near the land, the loved disciple cries,
"Christ stands on shore,"— so sharp are friendship's
eyes,—
"Behold the Lord!" The signal Peter takes,
And on the surges swims along the lake,
And, when arrived upon the oozy shores,
Devoid of guile, his well-known Lord adores.
His ten companions were not far behind,
Who, when they come, a ready banquet find
By some officious guardian angel laid,
To show their Master wanted not their aid;
Then on the sounding beach partook the feast,
Enjoyed the favor, and the Giver bless'd.
But when their wond'rous banquet now was o'er,
Refreshed by that, but by their Master more,
They gazed, yet feared their senses might deceive,

While joy allowed them scarcely to believe.
Cephas grown bold, who had so oft denied
That Lord for whom he would have oft'ner died,
Whose honest zeal so far his faith outran,
Urged Christ to speak, and thus the God began:—

"Thou whose warm zeal could death's worst shape outbrave,
And without sinking tread the slippery wave,
Say, as thou wouldst thy heart to heaven approve,
If more than these thou dost thy Master love? *
Peter, with caution, yet with zeal, replied,
And on the question bade his Lord decide:
"I dare not, who so little love have shown,
Or question theirs, or recommend my own;
But how I love, let Christ the witness be,
For Lord, thou know'st, and I appeal to thee."
"Then feed my lambs," the Saviour straight replied,
"In pastures green by some still water's side."
The self-same question was repeated o'er.
And drew the answer it obtained before.
Peter, still urged, must a third time be tried,
Who thrice affirms, for he had thrice denied;
But keenly tortured with ingenuous pain,
Thus made with warmth the same reply again:
"O why, my Lord, whose thoughts all secrets know,
A task so hard must Peter undergo?
How much I love, let me no witness be;
For Lord, thou know'st, and I appeal to thee."
"Then feed my lambs," our Saviour straight replied,

* John xxi. 15.

"In pastures green by some still water's side.
Now, while thou may'st, defend the sacred fold;
For time rolls on, and thou art growing old.
Some lustres since, thy nerves were firm and strong,
And Peter walked all vigorous and young;
Thy nimble hands could then thy members bind,
And men almost as soon might track the wind;
But when old age with palsied steps draws near,
And warns thee, thou must stay no longer here,
Then the rude soldiers shall, with churlish bands,
Seize thy weak arms, and tie thy trembling hands;
My double convert to his death consign,
Which struggling nature shall in vain decline.
I warn thee well, nor unprovided be;
But when I call, prepare to follow me."

He said, nor longer on the shore would stay,
But to fair Tabor's mountain leads the way;[13]
There to a numerous troop of friends appears,
Confirms their faith, and dissipates their fears;
In his bless'd law instructs each wavering mind,
And warns them all of dangers yet behind;
Of aid assures them to withstand their foes,
Though He departs and to his father goes;
Calms all their fears, directs them not to grieve
When at the last he takes his final leave;
And having thus prepared them for their lot,
Kindly salutes them, and forsakes the spot.

[13] Vid. Matt. xxviii. 16, where it is said, "the apostles went to a mountain where Jesus had appointed them;" and this probably was either Tabor, or that of the Beatitudes, because it was somewhere in Galilee and near the lake.

With peace dismissed, their steps they backward bend,
And at fair Solyma their Lord attend;
For his approach their pious minds prepare
With ardent wishes, holy hymns, and prayer.
While his bless'd work the infant church employs,
He comes, and with him all his train of joys;
Then with his little flock of happy friends
Forsakes the city, and the hill ascends
Of lovely Bethany; forever leaves
Thee, sweet Gethsemane; from both receives
Some new supplies to fill his humble train,
Till from the top they saw the distant plain,
O'er whose smooth bosom murmuring Kidron ran;
When thus the Saviour of the world began:—

"My Father calls, and I must shortly go.
Farewell, ye dear companions of my woe;
As Heaven must Christ till the great day receive,
Peace is the last rich legacy I leave:
Be that the mark of mine; by that rich boon
My little flock shall from the world be known.
Harmless as doves, but wise as serpents made,
I send you forth the truths I preach to spread;
I send you forth, as me the Father sent,
To warn mankind, and bid the world repent.
All power in heaven and earth his word secures,
To his loved Son; who now confirms it yours;[14]

[14] So says our Saviour: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth;" and again, "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you:" —Not the same power in degree, but the same sort of spiritual

To censure those who his soft yoke refuse,
And both in earth and heaven to bind and loose.*
Go then; and when to distant nations hurled,
Preach in my name, and proselyte the world—†
In mine and God's, for God and Christ are one,
And that bless'd spirit, from him and from the Son
Eternally proceeding:—boldly go,
As far as land is stretched, or waters flow,—
Till eastern realms your Lord their Saviour style,
Till gospel light illumines Albion's Isle;—
Till in the west new kingdoms yet concealed,
In time's revolving race to be revealed;—
Till empires, kingdoms, continents, and isles,
Shall hear my gospel, and partake its smiles.
Those who receive your words, and mine obey,
Shall in my blood wash all their sins away.
Those happy souls who thus for heaven prepare,
Shall, when I come, with triumph enter there;
While such as basely scorn their day of grace,
A reprobate incorrigible race,
Who mock my sufferings and insult my pain,
And make me groan and shed my blood in vain,—
These, when the globe expires in flames, must go,
From choosing vice, to endless worlds of woe.

---

power, that of binding and loosing; "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," etc. That is, God himself will ratify those censures and absolutions which they should rightfully dispense; this power not being given so much as to the seventy, much less to all Christians, but to the eleven only. Matt. xxviii. 18. The eleven disciples went away into Galilee; and Jesus spake unto them, saying, "All power is given unto me," etc.

* Matt. xvi. 19. † Mark xvi. 15.

"Nor will I you without credentials send;
Angels shall guard you, miracles attend
Your powerful words — these shall so prevail
That vengeance hastens where your missions fail.
The guilty nations smitten, with surprise,
Must own your power, or disbelieve their eyes;
For when the blessed Paraclete shall fall,[15]
And with his power inspire both great and small,

---

[15] The sense of the word παρακλητος (*parakletos*) is disputed among the learned. Some think it means an advocate, others a counselor, etc., and it may very well mean both. However, whatever is intended by it, the word that I use will reach it. Dr. Doddridge, in his Family Expositor, Vol. ii. p. 390, after paraphrasing Matt. xiv. 14, observes in a note on these words, ("The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations:") as follows: "The accomplishment of this extraordinary prophecy is admirably illustrated by Dr. Arthur Young, Vol. ii, pp. 216–234. It appears from the most credible records that the gospel was preached in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by Jude; in Egypt, Marmorica, Mauritania, and other parts of Africa, by Mark, Simon, and Jude; in Ethiopia, by Candace's Eunuch and Matthias; in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighboring parts of Asia, by Peter; in the territories of the seven Asiatic churches, by John; in Parthia, by Matthew; in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew; in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew; in Persia, by Simon and Jude; in Media, Carmania, and several eastern parts, by Thomas; and through that vast tract of territory from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, by Paul; as also in Italy, and probably in Spain, Gaul, and Britain. In most of these places success attended the preaching of the gospel, and Christian churches were planted in less than thirty years after this prophecy was delivered, which was sometime before the destruction of Jerusalem took place." It is thus, in one view, that we behold a train of events corresponding with the prediction, and the truths of the gospel disseminated over so large a portion of the globe. The promise, however, belongs *in an evangelical sense* to all the ministers of the gospel in all the ages of the world, and reaches to the end of time.